GONE WEST:

Three Narratives of After-Death Experiences

COMMUNICATED THROUGH THE MEDIUMSHIP OF

J. S. M. WARD, B.A.

LATE SCHOLAR AND FREEMAN

OF TRINITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE

THIRD IMPRESSION

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DEDICATION

THIS WORK BY ME IS INSCRIBED TO REGINALD LUCIEN WARD,

WHO FELL IN THE TIDE OF BATTLE WHERE FLANDERS MERGES IN FRANCE

AND PASSED FROM UNDER TIME'S FINGER WITH NEVER A BACKWARD GLANCE

FOR LOVE OF HIS NATIVE LAND IN BATTLE AGAINST A HORDE.

AND UNTO HIS COMRADES IN ARMS OF EVERY RANK AND CREED,

WHO GAVE THEIR ALL IN THE CAUSE OF JUSTICE, HONOUR AND TRUTH,

AGAINST THE POWERS OF EVIL THAT KNOW NEITHER PITY NOR TRUTH.

TO THE MEN WHO HELD THE BREACH IN THE HOUR OF BRITAIN'S NEED.

FOREWORD

By Conor Mac Dari, Jr.

Discussions concerning after-death states usually end by the well known pronouncement that “Nobody ever came back to tell about them.”

In “Gone West” we have the answer to this because Mr. J. S. M. Ward, the author, did just that. He visited the Astral Plane regularly, retained his consciousness while there, and his book is a fascinating record of his experiences among the so-called dead. He describes some of the dangers ever existing on the Astral Plane in the form of evil entities who endeavor to entice occupants, especially newcomers, to yield to the indulgence of liquor, sex, and other sensual vices in which they had participated while on earth. These evil entities, who are, as a rule former earth inhabitants, urge all among whom they mingle to practice the obsession of mortals and thus help to swell the ranks of the forces of evil.

On the other hand, Mr. Ward tells of the opportunities open for spiritual development and thus provides the reader with the necessary information to make the correct choice of companions and the paths to follow for his betterment. (In this regard the undersigned strongly urges the reader to direct his attention to ‘The Officer’ Part II).

The following, in Mr. Ward’s own words from the introduction of another work on the same subject will serve to make his position clear: — “In giving this narrative to the general public, I have been actuated by the desire to bring comfort to others in a similar position of loss. I knew that the dead die not long before my brother died, but of the manner in which they live I knew only a little. Except for a brief account of the astral plane by W. A., and another rather specialized account by the Officer, my knowledge related mainly to the spirit plane. Of the astral plane under war conditions I knew nothing.

“The interest Gone West aroused has been shown not merely by its sales, considerable as these have been, but by the large number of letters I have received, which have been of the greatest encouragement. Those of us who are endeavoring to spread the true knowledge of life beyond the grave, are doing so in the face of opposition alike from the ordinary man of the world and from the ministers of established religions. Sometimes we are laughed at, whilst at other times we are called necromancers. Some of our opponents even go so far as to hint that we are not quite sane, but this has always been the way in

which new truths are received at first. Nevertheless, it may be of interest to my readers to know that I am a perfectly normal man – one who is earning his living in business and who has every day to deal with complex mundane matters. The fluctuations in the rate of exchange, sources of the raw materials of industry, the German methods of trade penetration, and trade statistics are a few of the subjects with which I am concerned, and on all of which I have written articles and issued reports which are readily taken by the trade journals.

"I assure my readers that, from the financial point of view, it pays far better for me to write two or three articles on Openings for British Trade in say, South America, than it does to write such a book as this. I am not a medium plying for hire, as the daily papers would call it, and if you met me at dinner, unless I spoke of these things, you would find me no different from a hundred other busy men of affaires. Why, then, should the critics suppose that my ordinary clear business mind fails me when I turn to investigate psychical phenomena, or think I should waste my time practicing a heartless fraud on my readers? After all, those are the alternatives. If I did not feel that the message these pages contain was not merely true, but of vital importance to our sorrow-laden world, be assured that I would not thus publicly reveal much which is absolutely sacred to my personal life.—"

The later work from which this quote was taken, entitled "A Subaltern In Spirit Land" describes the passing of his mother and her arrival on the astral plane, this being the reason for the reference to his personal life.

The undersigned has been a student of occult subjects for over seventy years and I can honestly say that "Gone West" offers the best rendition of life on the astral plane that I have seen expressed in print. Those involved are performing a great public service in again making available this priceless knowledge so vital to the spiritual progress of humanity.

Conor Mac Dari, Jr.

August 3rd, 1974

INTRODUCTION

The manner in which these communications came to be received is plainly set forth in the book itself. They were due to the desire of H. J. L. to convey to me an account of life beyond the grave. He discovered that I was mediumistic — a fact of which I was unaware, although I have for many years been keenly interested in the occult.

The methods employed in conveying the information contained in this book were twofold: —

I. *Visions.* The first of these was prophetic, and foretold H. J. L.'s death. The first one after his death was very vivid, though at first I thought it was a dream, but nevertheless wrote it down. As the visions continued regularly once a week on the day of the week on which H. J. L. died (Monday), I was compelled to alter my views. In particular I noticed four chief differences: —

(a) They were coherent throughout. One of the most unsatisfactory features of dreams is the incoherency. Scenes shift from place to place without any regular sequence. People do things they would never do on earth, and the characters change before our eyes.

These visions were real through and through, coherent and logical in their development and, moreover, took up the narrative where it left of the week before.

(b) A normal dream fades almost at once, and it is rarely the case that it can be remembered in its entirety a few hours later.

The visions remained firmly impressed upon my mind until they were written down, which sometimes took a couple of days. Once they were written down they would tend to merge into the general body of remembrances which every mortal carries in his brain.

(c) The information was not due to the conscious or subconscious mind, for much of it was in violent opposition to my preconceived ideas on the subject, and it was some time before I would accept them, though I do so now completely.

(d) These visions contained verifiable facts entirely unknown to me, which nevertheless proved to be true on investigation. Some of these facts were of a personal and private character, known only to the dead man and one living person, and the latter admitted their truth.

Further, there were certain references which, to the writer, were unintelligible, but were recognized by the living person to whom they were related (as requested).

II. The other communications were obtained by automatic writing. With the exception of the first two or three, I was in complete trance, and was quite ignorant of what was written until I became normal again. The possibility of their being the product of my conscious mind is thus eliminated. With regard to the subconscious self, I would like to take this opportunity of protesting that while I am prepared to admit that such a thing does exist, I nevertheless hold that in most cases the word is a bogey set up by scientists to explain phenomena which they are unable to explain by the ordinary material laws, and which they are unwilling to ascribe to spirit influences. Yet, accepting the subconscious self at its highest valuation, it will not explain the presence of information which was quite unknown to me, and which, on its being investigated by others, proved to be correct. As an example of this, but not the only example, the following may be noted as given by J. B. P.: —

"I am only going to give you the name of a friend I met in this city. He is a Baptist, not a Congregationalist. His name is Richard Gresham Barker, born Oct. 20th, 1807, was Sheriff of Nottingham and a colliery manager at Babbington, near Notts. He died June 21st, 1892. His brother John was twice Mayor of Nottingham."

It was only after considerable search that Mr. K. was able to prove these facts to be correct, even to the minutest detail.

But without devoting more space to these problems, for those who desire verifiable evidence may obtain it from any ordinary spiritualist society, let us turn to consider the matter given in these pages.

The original plan of the work as arranged by H. J. L. was as follows: —

The Astral plane —

(a) As seen by a bad man, viz. 'The Officer'.

(b) As seen by an average man of the world, viz. W. A.

The Spirit plane, divided into —

(1) Hell, or the Realm of Unbelief, related by The Officer.

(2) The Realm of Half-Belief, related by H. J. L.

(3) The Realm of Belief lacking in Works, related by J. B.P.

(4) The Realm of Belief shown forth in Works, related by The Monk.

Owing to the enhanced cost of production due to the war, it was found necessary to reduce the book to a manageable size. To do this we were reluctantly compelled to publish only The Astral Plane, Hell, and the Realm of Half-Belief. As these are set forth in full, it will not be necessary to deal with them here, but a few words may be devoted to the two higher realms.

The Realm of Belief Lacking in Works, as depicted by J. B. P., is much brighter than the Realm of Half-Belief; the light being as the light in England at about 8 a.m. on a summer's day.

To this realm go all those whose faith was strong, but narrow and rather bigoted, and who failed, as many do, to act up fully to their beliefs. In the lowest division of this realm the spirits are still strong believers in their own particular sect, and there is a marked tendency for them to remain there segregated into narrow communities. Their principal failings are self-complacency and an unwillingness to make any effort to progress higher, being often well satisfied with their surroundings.

In the next division the smaller differences between the sects tend to disappear, and a few broad communities take the place of the numerous narrow religions from which the individual spirits have risen.

Those who have come up from the Realm of Half-Belief, like J. B. P., do not drift into the narrow sects of the lowest division. They arrive freed of preconceived prejudices, and devote considerable attention to the study of the various faiths they find there, and endeavor to draw from each the vital truths which are enshrined in them.

Some of the most interesting revelations J. B. P. made were that the Gods exist, or, at any rate, the forms of the Gods, and condescend to answer the prayers of their worshippers. In particular, he describes a service in a great Egyptian temple at which Osiris appeared. Similarly, he has visited a Hindu temple, where Kartikeya, the God of War, presided.

He also gave a most striking account of a library in the Realm of Belief.

"These libraries are on so vast a scale that they look almost like cities; there are many of them, of course, but each is divided into three sections. The first contains the forms of books which have ceased to exist. I mean by this, the actual volumes themselves. Of course all books do not come to us, many go to Hell"

"The second section is very different, for in it the books are not the forms of books made on earth but those created here. The best way in which I can describe them is to compare them with picture books. In short, they contain

ideas in picture form, and can be read by us just as the thought-pictures of our friends can be understood by us.... Few books are written for the first time over here in script...."

"The third type is difficult to describe as books at all, for the picture idea has been carried out to its logical conclusion. The nearest thing to it on earth is the modern picture-palace. Imagine a large room; at one end is a kind of stage, on which perform what at first sight appear to be real men and women. These are thought-forms, strongly visualized by the committee of scholars in charge of the room.... Thus an episode in History will be enacted in all its detail before our eyes."

His description should be compared with the account by 'The Officer' of a library in Hell.

The Realm of Belief shown forth in Works is seldom attained immediately after death. Thus to reach it a man must have been not only endowed with a strong faith, but must have risen above any narrowness of spirit, and, moreover, have lived a life full of love of his fellow-men. His faith must have been shown forth in good works. Indeed, those who so attain it may well be considered to have been saints on earth.

To this realm the spirits after death rise, but often by slow degrees, and once there, must remain a very considerable period. The light there is as the tropical sun at midday, and less advanced spirits would be unable to bear it.

The development of the various religious beliefs towards unity is set forth plainly in the plan contained in this work, but it should be borne in mind that this unity is attained not by watering down all faiths to one nebulous creed, but by the absorption into one community of all the facets of truth which each faith held, while what is false is shed.

The spirits in this plane devote themselves very largely to helping their fellow-men, especially in Hell, and continuously journey down to that place to save those who are in bondage.

The monk Ambrose, who died in the fourteenth century, devoted most of his life to this work, and at length obtained his desire, and passed through the 'Wall of Fire' and was lost to us. Animal lovers will be glad to know that his faithful dog followed him through the 'Wall of Fire'. With him passed also the spirit of a woman whom he had always loved, but being a monk could never marry on earth.

They passed through the ‘Wall of Fire’, or light, as it was described, to the mystic union of soul with soul, which it is understood takes place in the regions which lie beyond the ‘Wall of Fire’.

What is this great ‘Wall of Fire’ which cuts off the Sixth or Spirit Plane from that which lies beyond?

I am unable to answer this question. By some of the spirits it is called ‘The Second Death’, although this phrase is also employed to describe the transference from the Astral to the Spirit Plane.

We are told that some of the spirits fear it as men fear mortal death, but whereas death comes whether we wish it or not in its due course, this Second Death takes place only when the spirit is ready and anxious to pass on.

It appears to affect the form, which seems to pass more completely under the control of the entity, but the entity itself is not destroyed. This was made clear by an angelic form who guarded the entrance leading from the Realm of Belief lacking in Works to the Highest Realm. For when J. B. P. questioned him on this point he informed him that he had passed through the ‘Wall of Fire’ long before, and had now returned to labor on the Sixth Plane, adding, “... but on this plane forms are needed, and therefore we assume one. This is not my original form — it is not the form of an earthly man, but that of an angel. I create it by willing so to do. As I think myself, so I assume a form. If I desired I could assume the form of an animal or of a flame. Behold.”

J. B. P. “Before my eyes he took the form of a great flame.

“ ‘The pillar of fire!’ I cried. As I spoke he seemed to change at once, and became like a cloud. Then the cloud became all light, and once more I saw him in his angel shape.

“ ‘Cannot the evil spirits also do this,’ I inquired.”

“ ‘The Officer has described something similar. Those spirits whom you call devils can, but I may allow you to probe no deeper into these mysteries as yet.’ he replied.”

This Angelic Being, while refusing to give any details of what lay beyond the Wall, yet stated emphatically that the personal entity was not destroyed, though the form was affected.

Beyond this I have been unable to obtain any information. The spirits on the Sixth Plane do not know, and the guardian spirits who come thither from the higher planes refuse to speak.

Some people believe that on passing the ‘Wall of Fire’, the spirit returns to earth in a fresh incarnation, hut while this is probably the case with some, I am doubtful whether it covers all. We are informed that there are seven planes in all.

This work deals with the two lowest only, and since these Higher Planes must be peopled, it appears more likely that the most exalted spirits rise higher and higher without the need of reincarnation, whereas more lowly spirits need to return to earth to develop certain characteristics.

As to the difficulty of obtaining information from these higher planes, it seems probable that if received it would be so far above the heads of us mortals that we should be unable to comprehend it.

Even the highest realm of the Spirit Plane is so exalted that the monk declared that much of the information he could give would be beyond us on earth, and therefore devoted most of his narrative to accounts of his missionary work in Hell.

I am still continuing my investigations into life beyond the grave, and if this book should prove acceptable, hope at no distant date to publish a second volume containing an account of the two remaining realms, and a more detailed description of life on the Astral Plane.

Since the death of my brother in the trenches of Flanders, I have devoted most of my attention to conditions on that plane, and especially to the spirits of those who have died in battle. Their state is somewhat abnormal, and indeed the whole Astral Plane is greatly disturbed. My brother is now engaged in making a survey, as it were, of that plane, and is being assisted in his task by H. J. L.

If any reader has a question on life beyond the grave to which he desires an answer, I would endeavor to obtain it, but wish it to be plainly understood that I do not mean thereby that I will endeavor to trace any particular persons, nor to obtain messages from them. To do so is not my object.

As an example of what is required, I was asked to make inquiries as to the fate of animals after death — and the result is seen in this book.

As to what opinion the reader will form of the present work I know not, but, for myself, I have been profoundly impressed with the reality and the reasonableness of what I have seen and what the spirits have related of Life beyond the Grave.

J. S. M. WARD.

P.S. — Exception may be taken to the publication of the Officer's narrative, on the grounds that it is so gruesome that its appearance will serve no useful purpose; but my justification is (a) that the communicating entities desired its inclusion; (b) that on the astral plane there are grave dangers of which it is important that newcomers should be warned; and (c), that the Officer is now helping those who are passing on to the astral plane from the Great War.

PART I

COMMUNICATIONS FROM H. J. L.

Who died on the 5th of January, 1914, at 9 a.m. on his 80th birthday.

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THE LOWEST DIVISION OF THE SPIRIT PLANE

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CHAPTER I

THE DOORWAY OPENS

I, J. S. M. Ward, had a vision early in December, 1913, in which I learnt of the death of H. J. L., my, uncle and father-in-law. The vision began with a message that he had died suddenly, and, went on with the funeral, at which I was present. The sensations of grief, and the remarks and actions of the other mourners, were vividly impressed on my mind. When I awoke and later informed, Carrie, my wife, we decided to go down and see him when up in town, but unfortunately Carrie was not well enough to go on the day we had selected. On Jan. 5th, H. J. L.'s birthday, we received about 10:15 a telegram to say H. J. L. had suddenly died. All the sensations of grief that I had felt in my dream were repeated exactly, as were the incidents of the funeral. Even his face in his coffin looked like the one I had seen in my dream; it differed considerably from his face when alive. He was buried on Jan. 8th, 1914.

FIRST TRANCE VISION

During the night of Monday, Jan. 12th, i.e. one week after his death on Jan. 5th, at 9 a.m.

I dreamt I saw Uncle like, and yet unlike, he was before he died; something between what I remember him as before, and what he looked like after death.

He said: "I have been trying to speak to Carrie, but can't, so I have come to you. Tell her I am alive, more alive than before I died; that I am mentally clearer than I was for some time before I died. But here I have had to set to work to learn, as if I were a child again, much of what I should have learnt on

earth. I am with those who did just believe, but had not much real belief. Tell Carrie this.

"It was lucky for me that I did believe to a certain extent, as otherwise I should have been with the 'set' who are below us, i.e. those who did not believe. I used to say it did not matter much what a man believed, but I am learning I was wrong. It makes a big difference, at any rate at starting. The set above us are those who believed but did not fully act up to their beliefs."

J. W. "What do you mean by these sets?"

H. J. L. "After I died I found we join that set of people to which we naturally belong — that is, those who hold the same sort of belief or unbelief.

We have a teacher, somewhat like, the angels of the parsons, but they [the teachers. — ED.] don't look a bit like the silly pictures you usually see. This teacher instructs us in what we are lacking, and when that lack has been made good, we move on to the next set, which includes many more different people than our own. We get very bored with meeting only those who think exactly like we did. There is much more variety in the next set."

J. W. "What is that set?"

H. J. L. "Those who believed, but did not fully act up to their beliefs."

J. W. "Is there Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory?"

H. J. L. "I do not know whether there is a Hell. You see, I know nothing at all save about my own set, and the ones above and below. There are plenty of old friends I expected to see and have not; but, of course, they may be and probably are only in another set. Those who did not believe are in the set below: after a time they come to us.

"As to Purgatory, that corresponds roughly to where we all are. Only it's more a place of learning than of punishment. Still, we are punished, because I can't help regretting the time I wasted on earth which would have got me into a more congenial set. We all, strange to say, are rather lonely here. We are too much alike to be companions, and want to get on, so as to meet our old friends, who, we believe, are in other sets.

"I am learning, but it's slow work. I feel like a schoolboy again. It's funny — I died on my birthday and was really born here on it."

J. W. "Did you know anything of your funeral?"

H. J. L. "Yes, I saw myself lying dead, and saw you come and look at me.

"Be sure and tell Carrie what, I said; that it saves a lot of time if you do believe, and that we do live after death. I am very glad I believed as much as I did, and I wish I had believed more."

J. W. "Would you go back if you could?"

H. J. L. "No, certainly not. I am much happier here. I am making progress.

"However, I must be off now. It seems a funny thing to say to a schoolmaster, but I have to begin my schooling all over again."

(End of Vision. — J. W.)

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SECOND VISION

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Jan. 20th, 1914.

During the night of Jan. 19th, 1914, I again dreamt in a trance that I saw H. J. L.

J. W. "How are things going on with you?"

H. J. L. "Well, but slowly."

J. W. "I — we wanted to ask you some questions."

H. J. L. "Fire away. I don't know that I shall be able to answer them."

J. W. "Where are you? Do you come to me from somewhere else? "

H. J. L. "Not exactly. I am here all the time; our world impinges on yours. I hate similes, but I can best explain it by one. You know those "Pepper's Ghosts?" Well, it is as if we were thrown on to your stage, our scenery — and our characters walking about you, but unseen by you. Just as a real man on such a stage would not see the phantoms which surrounded him, but the audience sees both him and them. Or like a bank of clouds which blends into a range of hills, so that it is hard to say which are hills and which clouds.

"We are in the same world as you, but not subject to the same laws. For example, time and space don't exist. This sounds trite, and so it is, for the truth usually is trite, because it's true, and therefore always has existed."

J. W. "But you are here now. How, then, can there be no space? "

H. J. L. "Compare us to a thought. We are more than a thought, for we continue to think; but compare us to a thought; you may then get some idea of

what I mean. When on earth you think Ravenscroft; your mind calls up a picture of Ravenscroft and the people there. You see them as they were. To that extent we and you are alike; but your finer senses are controlled by your body and you are unaware of what changes may be taking place. Now, you know something of telepathy. Do you remember my telling the story of the only true ghost-story which the Psychical Society got, the one sent by the doctor?"

J. W. "Yes, I do."

H. J. L. "Well, after that I said, 'I think most of that stuff's rubbish, but there may be something in telepathy.' "

J. W. "I remember perfectly."

H. J. L. "Well, Jack, there's not only something but almost everything in telepathy. It's the outer edge of those faculties which we have to develop here. It's the main link between our world and yours. You know that some people have learnt of things which are happening to their friends at a distance. We all can do so here, and that is the way we communicate with each other; speech does not exist with us. This explains those sayings in the Bible about nothing shall be hid. You cannot tell lies here or be deceived. But that is not all, for every separate thought exists of itself and we can see them all.

"This explains the doctrine of the Catholics (at which I used to laugh) that a really evil thought, such as murder, is worse than a venial sin.

"My punishment consists largely of this, that all my evil deeds and thoughts rise up before me in as real a shape as I myself possess. They are there with all the surrounding impedimenta."

J. W. "What *do* you mean by that?"

H. J. L. "Well, Jack, I don't want you to think worse of me, so instead of quoting a real offence, I'll show you what I mean by a fictitious one.

"Suppose a man committed a murder, or even meditated one — not merely the actual murder, but all the surrounding details, such as the furniture and room in which it was, or was intended to be committed, are here."

J. W. "Then do you mean to say that there is no difference between the fault thought of and one committed? "

H. J. L. "It all depends on the reason why it was not. Supposing your better nature gains the upper hand and you refuse to act as your lower nature prompts you; then, after seeing the evil thought, you will be refreshed by seeing the good one — for all your good deeds and thoughts come here also.

"If the sin had not been committed solely because you were prevented by something else, then there would be no good thought to refresh your weary spirit. Of course a man may be temporarily prevented from giving way to an evil passion, and afterwards rejoice that it should have been so; all that he will see here. Thus each one lives in a world of his own creating, and the more nearly his world approximates to that of others around him, the more company, the less solitude will he have.

"Solitude is one of the worst punishments here, and so those who, though having many faults, yet loved much and had many friends, get their reward."

J. W. "Does this state remain constant, or do you get to know more people and your former thoughts haunt you less? "

H. J. L. "Now I told you we did progress only last time. You should not ask unnecessary questions, nor try to catch me tripping. I repeat, we do progress as we learn, and particularly as we learn to believe. As to the second part of your question, I don't really know exactly what happens, but as we go on thinking here we create fresh thoughts, and as these are of a nobler nature than those we thought on earth, they refresh us and enable us to bear more easily the grief we feel for our former faults.

"We realize as faults here things that on earth we deceived ourselves into thinking were not faults.

"I should add that at first it's rather like a hideous nightmare: — all one's dead thoughts come crowding round; but after a time they seem to fall into a distinct order, but I can't explain how. At any rate, things become easier. A lot of what I have been telling you I have recently learnt from my teacher. I have also learnt a lot from some of the others.

"To return to how 'I' 'come' to you. I just think of you, or, rather, concentrate my thoughts on you to the exclusion of other things. That is getting quite easy, though at first it was very difficult. But it's not so easy to get your spirit in 'tune' with mine, so that I can communicate with you.

"I tried several others first. I tried Carrie and then I had a shot at F. At last I thought I might be able to get into touch with you."

J. W. "Then I gather that you are in this world and see it as we do."

H. J. L. "We are in this world, but not restricted to it. Moreover, it does not look the same to us as to you. We see much more. We see the past, and some, I believe, can see the future, though I cannot. You will understand that, as you dreamt of my death a month before it happened. But I have taxed you long enough. Is there any point you would like to ask about?"

J. W. "Yes. You said something about our lower nature. Do you know whether there are any devils who inspire men with evil thoughts?"

H. J. L. "I do not know. When I was alive I did not believe in them, but since I died I have learnt to believe many things I laughed at then. There may be, for there are good spirits who were never men, but I cannot say I know."

J. W. "Why don't you ask your teacher?"

H. J. L. "If you were teaching a boy Euclid, and he suddenly asked you a question about some event in history, would you not tell him to wait till the history lesson came? Well, it's the same here. There is so much to learn that I must wait till I come to each thing in its proper place."

J. W. "I am glad you have come to me like this; but why did you? "

H. J. L. "Partly because I like you, but mainly because I think in this way I can do a little good, and it is not easy to do good here. I wish I had done more good when I was on earth. I particularly want you to tell Carrie. She understood me more than most of them did. We were always good friends. I wish I could speak to her, but I can't. You are getting tired (pause). Your mind fails to keep touch (pause)."

J. W. "Yes, I am tired, but I want to ask you — something — I can't quite remember what"

H. J. L. "I will come again (pause). I will come again."

Note by J. W. — I seemed to fall asleep after this, and can remember no more till I awoke next morning.

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THIRD VISION

Jan. 21st, 1914.

On the night of Jan. 20th, H. J. L. again appeared to me (in a vision).

H. J. L. "I have come to you again, but only for a short time. I want you to try automatic writing. A man I came across here, called P., suggested it to me; he says he used to live at Sheffield, that he'll show me how to do it, and that it would be a much better method of getting into touch with the 'still-living'. He's a decent sort of chap, and I rather like him."

J. W. "I have tried once or twice, but without any real results."

H. J. L. “Since I died?”

J. W. “No, some time before.”

H. J. L. “Well, try again. I’ve much on hand just-now, but I will not forget you. Remember me to Carrie.”

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AUTOMATIC WRITING (1). ALONE

Jan. 21st, 1914.

“I have come to you as I promised. Mr. P. is helping me. He says he is interested, as he used to live at Sheffield. It’s not easy to write this. I hope it is readable. I shan’t write any more now. —

H. J. L.”

CHAPTER II

INTRODUCTION OF ‘The Officer’

AUTOMATIC LETTER (2)

Jan. 22nd, 1914

In preparation for this these questions were written down by me on a piece of paper. I was in semi-trance during this and last letters.

Questions

(1) Do you not miss your chess and other recreations?

(2) Any class distinctions?

(3) Do you recognize ancestors or relations or well-known historical personages?

LETTER

“I don’t miss my chess because I can still play it. Games, entailing bodily skill we cannot enjoy, since we have no bodies, but those entailing mental skill are not in the same position. Chess is entirely a mental amusement, so we do play it with our minds or thoughts.

“I have just been playing with Lasker.[1] He beat me, but it was a good game. He just managed to get (the) opposition.’

“We do not, most of us, want bodily pleasures here, but those who do cannot have them. It’s for the most part the younger men; we older ones, of

the genus *sapiens homo,* had got tired of most of that sort of thing long before we died. Those who do crave for it are being punished for liking that sort of thing too much. Luckily for me I was an old man, and I never cared much for most of that kind of amusement.

"As to question 2, of course there are no class distinctions as such. There are no Tories here, perhaps because there's no plunder,(2) but at the same time lack of education in the widest sense results in something which at first sight rather looks like classes — that is, men who think and believe alike each fall into sets. The richer classes, who are more cultured, shall we say, are generally in different groups from the poor.

"Will answer No. 3 at another time. Good-bye. — H. J. L."

Note **1** I later I discovered Lasker was still alive, and taxed him with incongruity. He said he knew but, nevertheless, just as I "was able to enter the sixth plane and return, so was Lasker. Quite a number did this, but few were able to retain a clear recollection of what had passed. If they remembered anything at all, they called it a dream.

Note 2 by J. W. — H. J. L., knowing I was a Tory, often used (when alive) to say the Tories out for Plunder and Blunder.

Jan. 24th, 1914.

The following was written automatically in the presence of Mr. and Mrs. K., at their house. I was in complete trance in this and all future letters. — J. W.

Questions

(1) What part of the world was Mr. P in when he passed over?

(2) What do you mean by "believe"? Believe what?

(3) Can you recognize ancestors, relations, historical characters?

LETTER 1

"I am here. As to question No. 1, I will find out and answer in a minute. About No. 3: I have not met any historical characters here, but we can, and as we get on into the higher group or set we shall do so. Mr. P. says he died in the Far East — Japan.[1] I am getting on quite well now and will come to you on Monday next. I have met a man who has just come up to us from the set below. He is a most interesting chap. He was a thorough scoundrel before he

[1] Correct. This fact was unknown to me. – J.W.

died, and has been telling me some of his experiences since then. He says he has been through an awful time, and so I'll ask him more about it. I gather he has committed about all the offences there are.

About question 2: I mean *belief* generally, belief in a future life and God, and in fact 'belief.' The first thing to do is to believe something. It does not so much matter what, so long as you believe. A nigger believing in a fetish is better than a man who believes nothing at all. Believe! I will write again presently. The conditions are better than any before. You need a rest. Try again in half an hour. — H. J. L."

(Witnessed, in autograph, K.)

Jan. 24th, 1914. 6:30.

We waited half an hour. This time no questions were asked.

LETTER 2

"I have come. Learn as much as you can on earth and so save delay afterwards.

"Now about myself. That man I spoke of is near me. He was a man of good position. Had been an army officer and was turned out for disgraceful conduct. He married a girl and robbed her of her money. Left her behind when he went to India. Seduced a girl there and got her money: murdered a native. They found out about the girl but not about the native. Kicked out of the Army. Returned to England. There went in for bogus company promoting. Robbed dozens of poor people of their money. Finally came under the law. Got five years. While in prison his wife brought an action for divorce and won it.

"When he came out, set up as a card-sharper. Was discovered and turned out of the various clubs to which he belonged. Then he got in with a young fellow who had a new invention. Ran him for a time, finally murdered him and stole the invention. Got it accepted, and as he was going to sign the agreement was knocked down by a motor bus in the Strand and killed. It was one of the first motor buses invented. He wants to take control; shall let him for a minute."

(*Note by Ed.* — Here the style of writing quite changed and the writing itself was done at a great pace. Mr. and Mrs. K. declared that the medium's whole demeanor changed and became excited.)

Stranger. “I am taking control, but can’t manage it properly. I am not doing this for fun. I’ve been a beast all my life, and if I can do anything to make amends I want to. Shall sometimes; I cannot do this properly yet. I have been a miserable failure all my life, but if Mr. L. will help, as he has promised, shall doubtless make progress. He wants to take control now.”

H. J. L. *again*. “I am afraid he rather exhausted you. I am rather a tyro, but of course he is worse, as he has not had the calming influence of our teacher. He has only just got out of the worst torments, so is disturbed in spirit. Our calmer atmosphere will doubtless make his stuff much more readable. But he was so anxious to do some good at last that I had to let him try. He shall give you his experiences another time. They will be quite different from mine. He has been much longer here. He died in 1905.”

(So written in text as if he had paused to enquire — ED.)

“Says it was one of the first motor omnibuses that ever plied. Just his luck. I have taken up almost all the time about him, so will now close. — H.J. L.”

(Ended about 7.30.)

———————————

The following question had been written down by Mr. K.: —

Will the officer give his name?

———————————

LETTER 3

“As you have probably gathered, several friends are now helping us, but I have now sent away the officer. He exhausts you too much; besides, a man helping me here has told me we must be careful, as he has only just got into our set and so might ‘break loose’ if he comes in touch with earth too often. He means well, but the spirit is weak. However, we will see no harm comes of it.

“I have not met any old friends here, and so am a bit lonely, but am making friends with several men. One went up to the next set. He has promised to come and visit us sometimes, and so I hope to be able to report to you something of the set above us. As to question re officer’s name. I do not know it, but can ask him. Shan’t do so now, though, or he’d want to take control. I am not sure that he’ll give it; rather think at first he won’t, but daresay he will in time. He’s a wild sort of person. I can see you all quite well. There are

others with you — lots of them. Of course I do not know who they are, as they do not come from my set. But power is waning. Thank Mr. and Mrs. K. Good-bye — H. J. L."

CHAPTER III

H. J. L. OUTLINES HIS PLAN FOR THIS BOOK

VISION IN A TRANCE ON THE NIGHT OF Jan. 26th, 1914

H. J. L. "I am glad we started that automatic writing, as it has proved so successful. I propose to give you a series of such letters, in which I shall endeavor to give a connected account of our life over here. Now I gather that most of the spirit messages which have been received ignore almost everything which does not come under the writer's immediate knowledge. I propose to go further and to give in addition to my own personal experiences those of members of the sets above and below us. By this means I hope to cover at least those three; and as my friend who has passed on to the set above has promised to try and get in touch with a spirit who is passing on to the one above, I may be able to tell you something of the fourth set. I shall endeavor to give you a description of the 'geography' of this region, if so it may be called. Further, I shall give you my own experiences, beginning with my death and entrance to this new life. Further, I have been back to earth since last I saw you, and have seen a mail pass over to us from our side. My teacher took me. I am therefore able to comprehend several incidents in my own death which at first appealed vague and uncertain.

" 'Now it is difficult for you to understand our arrangements here; it is very different from what you are usually taught. It is not however so much that the original teaching of the church was wrong, but that it has been misinterpreted by its teachers. At the best, however, they only show a part of the truth. Not even here do we know all the truth. Truth is like a diamond with many facets. Each facet contains part, but only part, of the truth. Some facets are larger than others; so all creeds exist because of the 'facet' of truth, however small, which they possess. No faith which had no element of truth could exist at all for any space of time on earth. Often, however, the 'facet' is very small. The larger the amount of truth, the stronger that faith will, as a rule, grow. Thus the Roman Catholics are a numerous body, but neither they nor any Sect possess all the truth. They simply form one of the communities which exist in the sets where men believed. There are also Buddhists and 'heathen' there, and, indeed, all religions. From this stage we advance until we have gathered

in all truth, and then we shall really know what is meant by God. But that is far hence.

"Since, however, it is easier for you to comprehend the new facts with which I am about to deal if you can attach them to some theory with which you are acquainted, I shall adopt the general plan of Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell. Be under no misunderstanding, as depicted by many persons these names are wholly misleading. But if accepted as a convenient and rough classification, they will be helpful. One fact, however, you must clearly grasp. So far as I can discover there is no evidence of the eternity of Hell. Drop that idea and the rest will be easy to understand. At the same time spirits may be in what I will call Hell for countless ages. For example, Nero is there still, and likely to remain for many an earthly age.

"The officer has just come up from Hell, and so that proves it is not a place of perpetual torment. But as most spirits who communicate with the living are fairly spiritual ones, they have never been in Hell, and so can tell you nothing of it. Many do not know of its existence. For we do not know everything, only what, is necessary for our own progress. They need no pains of Hell, and so know not of its existence. Herein lies the interest of what the officer will relate. I myself could not tell you what he can from his own experience. Under Hell therefore I group all those who did not believe. Purgatory begins with our set. Until you have received the first glimmerings of faith you can make but little progress. When this has once been received the spirit enters our realms.

Hence Christ went down into Hell to teach the spirits belief. So, today exalted spirits sometimes go down thither to teach them to believe.

"Of Heaven we know little here; it is to be with God, and that is enough for us. We are on the lowest edge of Purgatory, and have far to travel before we reach there.

"Don't misunderstand me when I speak of Hell; I mean simply the 'Realm of Unbelief,' hardest hill the spirit has to climb. When that is surmounted the slope is easier. When speaking of Purgatory you must not think we are unhappy. True, we suffer, but so long as we are progressing we are happy. Our sufferings merely purge away the earthy dross which would drag us down.

"Another fact that may come as a surprise to you is that we can still fall into sin, or at any rate slip back instead of making steady progress. It is no case of rest and fall asleep. We are very busy striving to mount higher. But for us there is little temptation to carnal sin; of that we are free.

“But the unfortunate beings in Hell are still subject to their temptations, and to their own harm can sometimes gratify them. Of that more anon.

“Now a word to yourself. If at times you weary of this and think it fails in interest, I ask you not to give it up. It is entailing much labor on me, but I do it gladly, for thereby I am making amends for my own slackness on earth. Believe me, you too will benefit; but, above all, I hope the world may deign to learn something from what I am trying to communicate.

“I think I have made plain to you the general plan of what I propose. In reading the ‘news’ I send, don’t jump to any hasty conclusions but wait and compare the various items. Above all, remember that because I fail to state that a thing or person is there, it does not follow that they do not exist. These realms are so vast that no spirit knows more than a part of them. “Before we part, are there any questions you wish to ask me?”

J. W. “Do you have light and darkness there?”

H. J. L. “Not as you understand the words, for this is not a material world, therefore material light has no place here. But there is a kind of spiritual darkness. In Hell it is utter darkness, for there is no belief. As to what is here, look, open your eyes— see.

(Suddenly I perceived we were in a kind of twilight or soft evening light.)

“Here we do not perceive so clearly as those who do believe, therefore we are in this twilight. But as we progress the light becomes stronger. The light, if so you can call it, is within ourselves. We must part now.” (He began to fade and grow indistinct, then I was alone.)

CHAPTER IV

TWO STRANGE INCIDENTS

I was not sure whether the following ‘dream’ really formed a continuation of my trance vision of Uncle, or whether it was just an ordinary dream. It was, however, so vivid and peculiar that I entered it.

———————————

THE DUEL

I dreamt I was clad in a light blue costume of the time of Charles I., and was standing in the hall of a large Jacobean house. The furniture was of that period.

Suddenly there was a fierce hammering at the hall door. A man-servant opened it, and I saw a man on horseback. He was clad in black, and his beard was black and cut rather short and square round his face in a peculiar manner. His face was very white, and on his head was a tall fur cap.

He rushed into the hall and challenged me to a duel. I drew my rapier, which had a jeweled handle, as he drew his. He then snatched up a short sword or long dagger, broad towards the hilt, but with a fine point, and with this parried the thrust from my rapier.

My servant cried, “The Italian method”, and slipped into my left hand a similar dagger. I can distinctly remember the jar each time our swords were caught on the broad part of the daggers.[2]

At length my blade slipped over his and ran him through the shoulder. He then declared that he would go, but suddenly slipped into the house again and snatched up some papers which were on an oak chest near by. With these he turned and ran into the garden.

Furious at this treachery, I sprang after him and ran him through the body. My blade entered his back between the shoulder-blades and came out a little lower down in his chest. He fell and gasped out his life in a few minutes among the flower-beds.

I fell on the path sobbing and lamenting. As I lay there, I saw the villagers looking through the gates and the servants picking up the body of the dead man. I have a very clear recollection of the intense grief I felt.

Then I dreamt that I awoke from this dream and saw a picture of a sword, the very one I had used in the fight. I thereupon sprang from bed (the one in our room), and going to the chest of drawers found there a piece of paper. I thereon jotted down in pencil the chief points in my dream lest I should forget it.

As a matter of fact I had not really awakened, and in due course awoke in bed. There was no pencil or paper on the chest of drawers.

I did not see how this dream could have any connection with Uncle, but determined to ask him. — J. W.

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[2] Nov. 7th, 1916. — Have just seen, in the Tower of London, the exact counterpart of the dagger with which I parried his rapier. They are quite different from any dagger I had ever seen before, and were doubtless intended so to be used.

On Jan. 30th, at 2:50 p.m., Blanche sees H. J. L.

Blanche was leaning out of the dining-room window and looking into the garden, when she got very excited and declared that she saw the "Big Granddad." He was wearing his (black skull) cap on his head, and said, "Hello, Chickabiddy." He came floating down from a blue patch high in the sky and took hold of her right wrist and tried to pull her up to Heaven. She pulled, and he let go and went to various parts of the garden, and looked over the whole place by going up to a big rock on the hill behind the house.

She described all this, as it happened, to her mother, who was in the room, pointing in the various directions as the figure changed its position. Mrs. Ward says she seemed perfectly genuine at the time. She repeated it very accurately to me the same evening. She said, "Hello, Granddad," in answer to his greeting. He looked at her "with a smiling laugh!" and he appeared to be moving round the house and garden. — J. W.

This is an accurate summary of what took place at about 2:50 p.m. — C. W.

Blanche is four-years, three months old.

CHAPTER V

THE OFFICER

Jan. 31st. At Sheffield

LETTER 6, AT 7:00 P.M., BY H. J. L.

Questions written down

(1) Officer's name?

(2) Had duel dream anything to do with you?

(3) Did you come to Blanche on Friday?

"I am here, and will begin by answering the questions first. No. 3: I did see Blanche. I thought I should like to see where you lived, — never having been there.

"It was my natural attraction, not any deliberate intention of mine, that caused the 'pull.' I am trying to write more closely, as Mr. K. asks, but it is not easy yet. No. 2: The dream is curious, as it has nothing to do with me, but is the theme which haunts a friend of mine here. He killed a Pole who had saved his life during the Thirty Years War on the Continent. Afterwards the man entered the secret service of the Parliamentarians. His grief was because he killed his benefactor; but he had to, as the man was stealing papers which

would have implicated many in a plot to place Charles II on the throne. Why you saw it I can't say, but you evidently did, and since it was his mind picture, identified yourself with him.

"As to question 1: the officer absolutely refuses to give you his name, and I think his reasons are good. He shall give you them in his own words. I am standing by, so there is no danger."

(At this point, Mr. K. informs me, my whole manner changed; I became excited; also the way in which I held the pencil changed.)

The Officer. (The writing is quite different here.)

"Give my name? No! No! I will give you the reason, though. I have a daughter: isn't it bad enough that she should have my blood in her veins, poor devil? But that she should become known as the daughter of a murderer! No one knows that I murdered those men. If it was once known, what chance would she have in life? Who would marry her? And what of my poor wife? No, if what I write isn't worth your while, do without it; but you'll be unwise. I want to do some good — not harm — to my wife and child. They say I must stop. Mr. L. is going to take control now."

(Mr. K. saw the change take place in my manner, etc. — ED.)

H. J. L. "I am sorry he would not give his name, but I think he was right. But as I knew he would not, I have persuaded the spirit who has gone to the set above to give his as e*vidence.* He has no reason to fear that it will do harm. He shall introduce himself."

(Here my manner and way of. holding the pencil changed so markedly that Mr. K. placed a cross against the line thus, X.)

"This is the first time I have taken control, and so will introduce myself and will give you details so that you can prove me. Mr. L. has asked me to help in this important plan of his, and I am to describe, so far as I can, what this set is like, i.e. the one above that in which they who only half believed are. I was Dr J. B. P., Principal Emeritus, ----------Congregationalist Coll. I founded the B — L— B —, was joint editor of the ————————, and wrote the ——. I was born Dec. 17th, 1830, and died Jan. 26th, 1911.[3]

Is this *enough* evidence? My friends would probably never believe that I only half believed, and I hardly realized that this was the case myself. But it

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[3] Mr. K. investigated these facts and found every statement made was correct. We none of us knew what Emeritus meant, but looked it up, and found it meant "retired" or " pensioned." As relations of this man are still alive, and would resent the use of his name, I have been reluctantly compelled to suppress these details, which were absolutely convincing to us.

was due to over-much study of theology. I lost, or nearly lost, the substance for the shadow. Now good-bye.

Mr. L. is in charge of us, and I shall write as he instructs, giving you, I hope, much useful information which I pray may guide your steps to the realms of light.

God bless you all four."

(Mr. K. marked the following with X to show the change of control.)

"I take control again to close this letter (H. J. L.) In the next I shall start giving you the detailed account of my death and first experiences here. The officer and Mr. P. will not appear in the next. Rest half an hour. —H, J. L."

CHAPTER VI

H. J. L. DESCRIBES HIS DEATH

LETTER 7. SAME NIGHT, 8 P.M.

"I became unconscious and after a time recovered, or so it seemed. Indeed, my mind suddenly became clear, but I began to feel a heavy weight. Gradually I realized that this weight was slipping away from me, or rather, I was sliding out from it, as if someone were drawing his hand out from a wet glove. Then I began to feel tree at – one end, so to speak, and then I began to see again.

"I saw once more the room and the people in it. Then I was free! Free! I saw myself lying stretched out on the bed, and from my mouth came, as it were, a cord of light. It vibrated for a moment, then snapped, and from my mouth came away. At that moment someone said, 'I think he has gone' Or if they did not say it, they thought it. Then I realized what I looked like for the first time. How different from what I had always seen in my looking-glass! But was it I? It looked so strange.

"But even as I looked I was aware of an awful feeling of cold."

(Mr. K. and the others say that while the next few lines were being written, I exhibited all the signs of suffering intense cold. I shivered and moaned, "Cold, cold," most piteously.)

"Cold! cold! Piercing feeling of cold. It pierced me through and through. Nothing I can write can give you any idea of that cold. The icy blast pierced me as no earthly wind ever did or can. I was a naked soul, no body, nothing to give me warmth. I shuddered and shivered like this for many a seeming age.

“Suddenly it seemed to grow a little less. I was aware of a presence. How can I describe him, this glorious being? Then I could hardly grasp any clear idea, but having since been in his company constantly, I can describe him a little better. Even now he seemed to change every moment. At one instant I seem to know him well, at another he changes and I can get no clear idea of his face or form. He shimmers and shines and flashes, and seems as if he were made of fire. His robes, his face, his whole form is as it were fire. Yet that word gives but a faint idea, nor would the word light be any nearer. All color, too, is there. This glorious one is my teacher.

“Hardly had I perceived him, when the whole room in which I stood and the people who were there seemed to dissolve and fade away. Lo! I was in the most exquisite scenery imaginable. Every lovely spot I had Over visited was there, and countless others which I had never seen — beautiful rolling hills clothed with grass and trees; real trees, yes, and animals and even butterflies; flowers, too, of every description, not only English wild and garden flowers, but all manner of foreign plants, orchids and so forth, the like of which I never saw on earth. Nor did they seem strange or out of place, nor yet the sight of tropical palms and English oaks growing side by side. On earth it would certainly have seemed so, but here it appeared quite natural.

“ ‘Where am I?’ I thought, and no sooner had the idea entered my mind, if indeed one can use the word, than the ‘Shining One’ seemed to answer.

“ ‘You are in the land of After-Death. Are you surprised that there are trees and animals here, and even grass? Know that here comes every thought which you have ever thought; soon also you shall know that is so, to your sorrow; and, further, here come also the spiritual forms of all that ever lived. Thus is our Spirit World built up and thus it constantly increases. All that lives, no matter how humble it be, comes here of itself. All thoughts come here. Hence you recognize many beauty spots you knew on earth. Hence also the palm and the oak, and the orchid which you never saw. You have much to learn.’

“ ‘Do all thoughts live’ I cried (or thought). Even as the idea formed, the whole scene was blotted out from my perception.

“A horror seemed to grip me.

(Mr. K., etc., declare that here I again began to exhibit signs of acute anguish. — Ed.)

“Like a hideous nightmare, on every side visions seemed to press me round. They weighed me down. I, who but a moment before had seemed so light, now seemed to be crushed under an intolerable weight. I saw them not with mortal eyes, I perceived them with my whole being. “I call them visions, but

they were in real bodily form, like tableaux, moving and acting again before me all my past.

“My past deeds crowded before me, not in any order, but like a dream, all at once. Oh! the anguish as once more rose up deeds long since forgotten. Little or great, nothing was now forgotten. At last, after what seemed countless ages, an inspiration seemed to seize me, and I prayed. I had not done so for years and years, but now I prayed, ‘O God, help me’ and as I prayed, really prayed, slowly the wild chaos began as it were to sort itself out. It, as it were, took a kind of chronological order, and the scenes took the form, as it were, of a street which stretched far away, far beyond my ken; and they will go on increasing as I progress till they reach to the judgment seat of God. And among them I saw many visions which came as a relief to my tired soul — little acts of kindness which I had long forgotten, times when I had resisted temptation. So I found, as it were, my location. — H. J. L.”

Witness, K.

CHAPTER VII

HOW THE LIVING APPEAR TO THE DEPARTED

VISION IN TRANCE ON THE NIGHT OF FEB. 2nd, 1914

H. J. L. “Ask your friends to keep a watchful eye on you from the time that the officer takes control till the time when I resume it, particularly during the periods of rest.

“Pay careful herd to these points, as there are certain risks which must be faced in this kind of work. You are quite safe so Iong as you obey my instructions to the letter.

“You will receive a letter* from Mr. K. tomorrow (Tuesday) confirming the details regarding Dr. K., so I trust you are now quite satisfied.

**This I did receive.*

“With regard to what the officer writes, I can promise you every word is true._ “but he, too, only speaks of what he knows. There may be depths below that to which he sank, and doubtless other spirits have not all had the same experience, though in Hell.

“What he will tell you explains much of the common forms of occult phenomena; i.e. death portents, haunted houses ‘plaguing,’ and so forth.

“Don’t be afraid, we will stand by you, and so long as you obey my instructions you will be all right. Have you any questions?”

J. W. "When you are doing the automatic writing, can you see those who are present?"

H.J.L. "Yes, but they look rather different to what they do to you. We see them as they are, not as they seem to be. Thus it often happens to us that those whom earth folk consider beautiful seem ugly, while those who look homely to you, to us seem beautiful."

"As a rule, we see the souls rather than the bodies. The bodies are there like a grey mass, as in the Rontgen ray photos the bones show through the flesh. If we greatly wish we can sometimes see the bodies, but even still the people cannot deceive us into thinking them beautiful when they are not. Their spiritual ugliness shows through their physical beauty."

"We see, too, all the spirits who have been attracted round, whether they are good spirits or evil, for some people and places have the power of attracting spirits, sometimes good and sometimes evil. Now I must return to my task here. — H. J. L."

CHAPTER VIII

A PLAN OF THE SPIRIT PLANE

SIXTH TRANCE VISION OF H. J. L., BY J. W., ON MONDAY, FEB. 9th, 1914

H. J. L. "For your general convenience let me tell you that this realm is divided as follows: —

"1. Belief with works.

"2. Belief without works.

"3. Half-Belief.

"4. Unbelief. — Hell.

"When the soul has reached the highest plane of the first division, it goes through something that is akin to a second death, for there it leaves behind its spiritual body. But the soul who attains to that state rejoices in its coming relief — it does not fear it as the mortals do death, for those souls who are not yet ready do not cross the barrier.

"Once they have passed into the next realm, they cannot return. There are, including earth, seven such realms, of which the highest is to be with God.

"We who are here know only of the realm we are in, which we will call the sixth, the seventh being earth, which includes the astral plane.

"We cannot go to the fifth until our time has come, and then we cannot return.

“Still, to this rule are certain exceptions. Very rarely messengers are sent down to us from the realms above, but this only happens for some good reason, and is comparable to the visible and audible return of one who is dead to earth.

“The other and more usual method is through a medium. Just as we communicate through you, so those in the fifth realm use a spirit in the higher planes of the sixth through whom to communicate. Any message from the fifth realm would thus have to pass through two mediums to reach earth.

“Each plane in the sixth realm is divided into various divisions, and sometimes these divisions are divided into spheres. I will show you a kind of diagram, so that you can grasp it better.” Then a huge sheet seemed to appear before me, with the preceding diagram written in lines of fire.

The sheet appeared grey.

Diagram of Spirit Plane – see end of book.

H. J. L. continued: “Of course this is only a diagram, and, further, I have made it as simple as I can. Thus I have, of course, not attempted to show every small sect, but only the chief ones; yet you must remember that every religion is there.

“The diagram refers to our state or condition, not to place, which does not exist with us. Further, there are many fluctuations and cross-currents which I cannot show easily. Thus, Sufism has obvious similarities to Pantheism, and Mormonism to Mohammedanism.

“So, too, souls fluctuate within their plane. Thus the officer sometimes reaches division 2, but he is usually very decidedly in division No. 1.

“I am in division 2. As you reckon time, I was but a few days in division I, but to me it seemed many years.

“Here what I call soul-study is the chief business; our relaxation is what was our work on earth. This brings us into touch with men of similar occupations and tastes, though differing in religious matters.

“Thus we may compare this side to a series of circles.”

Again on the screen of grey I saw this diagram of fire.

Spheres of Interest. See end of book.

“Thus I get to know a man who is keen on archaeology because we are both interested in architecture, though from somewhat different points of view.

“I need not labor the point, as I see you grasp it. Here, you will see, the man who is interested in absolutely only one thing here, as on earth, will get to know far fewer people. These circles keep men in touch who otherwise would be quite separated owing to different religious outlook. Thus the modern Roman Catholic and the ancient Greek philosopher may meet in the Greek spheres, as these circles are often called, both being interested in Greek culture from a different standpoint.

“While we are in the region of half belief, the religious divisions are only faintly visible, but when one gets into the set above one finds them very clear. You must first grasp a few truths firmly before you are ready to absorb others.

“Each sect grows towards the others as men progress, because while they retain the vital truth which has called them into existence, all religions lose their errors as the believer mounts higher towards God, who is Himself Truth.

“A point that may not be quite clear is that in division 3 of our set the first messengers start. These go, down for the most part, as far as ’the schools’ They are not the glorious ones of fire who go down into Hell itself. They come from far above. The risk for our people would be too great. Even in the schools the earth pull is so strong that the messengers cast back their own progress for many earthly years.

“The Babes’ Schools are for those children who died too young to learn anything. They learn to believe, and as recreations they learn what you call work, only it is, of course, on a higher plane. No need to learn to read or write, for example.”

J. W. “Who teaches them?”

H. J. L. “From division 3 go down many women who for some reason were never mothers on earth. Thus they satisfy the primal instinct of women. Also schoolmasters and parsons go there. Often they go down for what you would call a space of time, and then return to their work in division 3; for teaching is not work here, but recreation.

“Now do not turn my diagrams into a cast-iron system. Remember there is far more flux here than on earth.

“Now I have told you enough for the time being. Is there anything you wished to say?

J. W. “What is the purpose of the ‘school for those who have progressed,’ and why is it that this school is separate from that for the babes? “

H. J. L. “They must get some vague ideas before they can even half believe. As yet they simply have a vague longing to believe. They must also learn to

realize the evilness of the scenes which rise up before them from their former life.

“They are like babes in knowledge, and must learn; but you would not have them mix with the innocent babes, would you? Now good-bye.”

CHAPTER IX

THE PASSING OF A SAINT

LETTER FROM H. J. L.

Feb. 14th.

“I have taken control. I have been to see a death from this side. My guide took me. We entered a room, I cannot explain exactly how, but we simply found ourselves there. It was a large, airy room, nicely but not very expensively furnished. Outside there was a garden, but, being winter, of course there was not much life in it.

“On the bed was an old man about seventy years, a parson. My guide spoke:

“ ‘This was a faithful minister of the truth as far as he knew it, one of those souls who come straight to the realm of belief, in the land where men believed and acted up to their beliefs. He is the Roman Catholic priest of this parish.’

“Over his bed hung a Sister of Mercy, and beside him knelt a priest, who was giving him extreme unction.

“Suddenly the room became full of beautiful spirits. They filled the room and stretched far out into space.

“ ‘Who are these’ I asked.

“ ‘All the fair souls he has helped to save. See this woman, she was a poor fallen sister whose feet he turned to the paths of truth. That was a foolish boy who, but for him, would be in the set below yours. That father would have driven that girl, his daughter, on to the streets, but he [the priest. — ED.] took her to a nunnery, and by degrees softened the father’s heart. Now both of them are in the realm of belief, of those who acted up to those beliefs. All these have come to welcome their pastor and friend.’

“Then I was aware of a still more glorious being.

“ ‘Kneel . . . ,’ whispered my guide.

“All that glorious company sank on their knees, I humbly with them.

“ ‘Who is he?’ I whispered.

“ ‘He is the teacher and ruler of that realm. He comes to take him home. Look!’

“Slowly from the body a light seemed to rise, strongest at the head. It was almost golden, but had a touch of blue in it. Gradually it seemed to take the form of a head and shoulders, and slowly I saw this figure of light draw out from its fleshy covering. Soon it was clear, and at once a glad cry broke from the lips of the hundreds who were present.

“ ‘Father, your children greet you with joy and gladness,’ they seemed to say.

“And the good priest smiled on them, and, as he did, I noticed the body too seemed to smile. The spirit turned and blessed those earthly ones who were watching by the bed.

“Then the cord of flame, which had been growing longer and longer, snapped, and I heard a wild cry of sorrow from the mourners below; but it was quite drowned in the song of rejoicing which burst from the lips of the spirit throng. The Great Spirit took him by the hand and seemed to say: ‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in a little, now thou shalt rule over many. I make thee the pastor of all these whom on earth thou didst save’ and the wild song of joy which burst from the assembled crowd still rings in my ears.

“Then we were alone, I and my guide, and the humble mourners, but I knew it was well, and I too went away rejoicing.

“I shall write no more. Thank all five who have helped to-night. I hope the two newcomers are now satisfied as to the necessity for the officer’s work, and also realize the full aim of this book. Again thanking you. — Yours, H. J. L.”

(Those present were Mr. and Mrs. K., Mrs. S., Mr. and Mrs. J. — Feb. 10th, 1914.)

CHAPTER X

DESCRIBES THE SCHOOL TO WHICH HE WENT AND WHAT HE LEARNT THERE

SEVENTH TRANCE DREAM

Feb. 16th.

H. J. L. "Well, Jack, do you wish to ask me any questions? "

J. W. "What has happened to that beautiful tract of country you spoke of when you had just died?"

H. J. L. "Open your eyes."

"Then it seemed as if my eyes were opened and behold! I was in the most lovely country! The light was of the kind one sees on a summer evening. Over the distant horizon the red glow of sunset was just visible, tingeing the hill-tops and reflected in the water of many streams and lake lets. We were standing side by side in an avenue of trees, tall and splendid. I saw H. J. L. quite plainly. He was not dressed in the clothes I had seen him in when he had appeared clairvoyantly, i.e. earthly, but in long flowing robes of white which seemed as if they were really part of his body in some mysterious way. A soft fault light seemed to come out from his body, impossible to describe. Looking again at the landscape, it seemed to me to contain everything beautiful of natural scenery. The view grows wider; I perceive lakes and snow-capped mountains, rushing rivers, and lo! beyond all, the sea. But over all was a soft evening light.

"Do you have day and night here?" I asked him.

"No. The light comes from ourselves, though, indeed, there is that mysterious red glow. It is the light of God, of Faith, of Truth, which reaches us but goes no further. The higher we go the brighter it becomes, till at length it is all in all. In Hell there is no light either from Faith or the individuals there.

"The real light by which we perceive things is within ourselves. The light you see I hardly realize; it is more comparable to the other effects of the landscape than light by which we can perceive."

We seated ourselves on the soft grass under an oak tree, and below us I could see palms and tropical birds mingling with the ordinary English scenery.

"Tell me what happened," I asked, "after the visions had sorted themselves out as you told me they did in your letter."

H. J. L. “On either side the ‘street’ of visions stretched as far as I could see, impinging on the landscape, which nevertheless I began to perceive again. Suddenly my teacher and guide stood beside me.

“ ‘Come with me,’ he said, and led me clean through one of my ‘visions’ into the country beyond. How to explain exactly what happened to my *visions*, I know not; but though they always haunt me, are with me even at the present moment, though unseen by you, yet they gradually fell into the background as it were. .

“We walked across the fields and down the slope of a hill, and as we did so, I saw the roof of a splendid building.

“ ‘What is that?’ I asked.

“ ‘The school to which you are going.’

‘“ School! I’m not a child!’ I cried.

“ ‘Indeed you are, an absolute child in matters of Faith. Look how small you are!’

“As he spoke I realized that he had become tall, but could not realize that I was small.

“We now stood before the portals of the building, surely the most magnificent and beautiful school which was ever conceived.

“Soon I was taken into a classroom, for so I must needs call it; for lack of a better name, and saw a number of boys. Boys! No, they were men, but strangely immature, though they looked like little miniature adults.

“Then I saw their master or instructor. What a difference! Not merely was he a well-grown man, but he seemed to be made of light — light which filled the whole classroom with a bright, soft glow. The bodies of the other boys looked grey, though some were brighter than the others, and mine, I discovered, was the darkest of them all.

“Next moment I looked round for my guide, but he was gone. But the master took me quietly by the hand and set me in a seat. Then began the most wonderful lesson I have ever witnessed. His methods were entirely different to those of the ordinary schoolmaster. He seemed to draw the knowledge out of the boys rather than attempt to tell them anything. Most of the questions were quite unintelligible to me, though the others seemed to understand them quite well. His method consisted in asking cleverly arranged questions, and the answer to each led on to the next question.

“After a while he turned to me and said, ‘Would you like to ask me any questions?’

“ ‘How is it,’ I asked, ‘that everything looks so solid here, and, above all, how is it I have a body? I thought I was a spirit.’

“*He.* ‘What do all human beings consist of?’

“*H. J. L.* Body and soul.

“*He.* ‘How would a scientist define these?’

“*H. J. L.* Matter and force.

“*He.* ‘Good. What happens to the matter when you die? Is it destroyed?’

“*H. J. L.* Matter can’t be destroyed. It merely changes its form. My body will rot and become earth, and plants will grow out of it.

“*He.* ‘What of the force which made that body act?’

“*H.J. L.* It has come here. It is the spirit. It, too, cannot perish.

“*He.* ‘Neither the matter nor the force perish. Yet is the body on the earth the same as when you lived?’

“*H.J.L.* No.

“*He.* ‘What makes it different? If you were to look at it now, wherein would it chiefly differ?’

“*H. J. L.* Well, it would be losing its old shape. Its form would be different.

“*He.* ‘The form would have gone. If neither the matter nor the force perish, what happens to the form? Can that perish?’

“*H.J.L.* I do not see why not.

“*He.* ‘What of the form of the thoughts which haunt you? Their form has not perished. Why, then, should your form perish if theirs remains?’

“*H. J. L.* Yes; but I still exist who thought those forms, so someone must have thought of me before I existed if I am like my thoughts. For I though’ of them, and so they came into existence.

“*He.* ‘Precisely. Someone must have thought of you. That person is God. He created you by thought, and so, too, you create things by thought What lessons have you learnt?’

“*H. J. L.* That form, like matter and force, does not perish. Secondly, that, as God created me by thinking of me, so I create forms by thinking of them.

“*He.* ‘And what answer can you deduce to your questions from these facts?’

"*H. J. L.* I suppose all that I see are forms, and being a *form* myself, they seem as solid as myself. But why do I seem solid?

"*He.* 'How could you seem otherwise? There is no matter here.'

"*H. J. L.* If I went back to the earth as I am, should I then appear to myself less substantial?

"*He.* 'Would you thereby become matter?'

"*H. J. L.* No. You mean unless one becomes matter one's self, one would only seem form and force, not matter.

"*He.* 'If a light is placed in the midst of a cloud of smoke, what would you see?'

"*H. J. L.* Why, of course, a light shining, through perhaps dimly, through smoke.

"*He.* 'What is a flame?'

"*H.J.L.* Force.

"*He.* 'Nothing more?'

"*H. J. L.* It of course has a form.

"*He.* 'What is the smoke?'

"*H. J. L.* Matter and form.

"*He.* Does this not answer your question?

"*H. J. L.* You mean I should see the spirit form shining through the material form as a candle does through smoke or fog?

"*He.* 'Yes.'

"*H. J. L.* Having left matter behind, shall I ultimately also leave behind form?

"As I spoke these words, a terrible stillness seemed to fill the room. All the other boys leant forward expectantly.

"*He.* 'You have asked a question which I at any rate cannot fully answer. But this I can tell you —that we do leave behind the present form on rising to the next realm. What happens none of us here knows. We cannot see beyond the wall of fire any more than mortal eyes can penetrate the veil of death. The Great Messengers may know, but we who do but come from the highest divisions of this realm know not. You still wish to ask a question?'

"*H. J. L.* We who are created by God look to Him for help and consider Him responsible for our well-being. Are we also responsible for the forms we create?

“Again the silence that could be felt brooded over the room.

“*He.* ‘You ask wise questions, though so young. What happened to you after you had spoken awhile with your guide?’

“*H. J. L.* I told him of the hideous nightmare which had seized me, and how, it sorted itself into order when I prayed.

“*He.* ‘Does this not answer your question in part? Did not your thoughts claim you?’

“*H. J. L.* I bowed my head in shame and sat silent.

“*He.* ‘But your question means more than that. Speak on.’

“*H. J. L.* But my thoughts cannot create fresh thoughts, as I can.

“*He.* ‘Directly no, but what of indirectly?’

“*H. J. L.* How can they even indirectly?

“*He.* ‘In the material world an evil act is done. Are there none who copy that evil act?’

“*H. J. L.* That is so, of course. But surely things are different here?

“*He.* ‘Tell him the answer to that.’

“One of the boys then spoke as follows: —

“Nothing exists on earth which has not its counter-part here. We see this in the trees and birds and buildings, as also in many other things. But all things here lack crude matter.”

“*H. J. L.* ‘But do their evil thoughts here influence others to evil?’ .

“*He.* ‘When on earth did you never notice that two men, or even more, each working independently, even separated from each other by thousands of miles, at the same moment make the same discovery?’

“*H. J. L.* ‘Yes, often, but put it down to coincidence.

“*He.* ‘There is *no such thing* as coincidence. That word is merely a cloak employed by men to disguise the fact that they are ignorant of some of the fundamental laws of God.’

“ ‘Again, have you never seen how an idea will continue for ages to influence mankind, though all who knew its origin have passed away?’

“ ‘Have you never seen how such an idea, though forgotten in its original home, will yet reappear somewhere else without any known connection having taken place?’

"*H. J. L.* Then, once created, a thought may go on creating fresh thoughts?

"*He*. 'Yes; but only such as relate to it. It could not create a fresh thought on an entirely different subject.'

"*H. J. L.* But a man can. Why, then, is it different? He may at one time create a cruel thought which will go on influencing others to do cruel deeds, yet at the next moment he may create a thought of kindness which others will develop into much that is good. Why this difference?

"*He.* 'Of what does a man consist?'

"*H. J. L.* Matter, form, force.

"*He.* 'Of what does a thought, once created, consist?'

"*H. J. L.* I suppose form only.

"*He.* 'You are answered.'

"*H. J. L.* Ah, then it is the presence of what you call force. What is force?

"*He.* 'Some say force is God, and some that force and matter are God, and some that force and matter are the same, and it is this that is God. Can man create either?'

"*H. J. L.* I suppose he creates only forms.

"*He.* 'Are you not, then, answered?'

"*H. J. L.* I don't see quite how it answers my original question, namely, why we can create variant thoughts when our own thoughts cannot. '

"*He.* 'God creates you; you create your thought: your thought influences others.'

"Your thought's action is bounded by the thought that created it; your actions are bounded by the force which actuates you. God is bounded by nothing.

"*H.J.L.* I see it all. I cannot think about that of which I have no knowledge. But God is knowledge.

"*He.* 'God is all in all. You have learnt your first lessons. Now go for recreation, all of you.'

"Next moment we were outside like boys running out from school, and we amused ourselves in many various ways. But our pleasures here are mental. What was our work on earth is our amusement here.

"I very naturally drifted into the set who were interested in architecture. They varied in size, or, really, in spiritual development. Many were in the upper

forms of the school, and one of these suggested we should go off to see some of the famous buildings which had at one time existed.

“ ‘ I don’t want to see any of the hideous villas which disfigure most of our suburbs’ I remarked.

“ ‘Such as one of those you built, eh? ‘remarked a boy whom I recognized as a man I knew slightly on earth.

“I should have felt annoyed on earth, but here I only chuckled.

“The big boy who had suggested the expedition answered, ‘Oh, you need not fear that. All that is hideous goes to Hell. We don’t get the finest work here, of course — that goes to the people in. the sets above us. Still, all our stuff is good. There are some very fine Assyrian buildings we might go and see!

“ ‘Do all the buildings come here, or only those which have perished? ‘I asked.

“ ‘If a building is practically untouched it does not come here, but if it is partly destroyed and rebuilt, the whole of the original form comes here. You see, the alterations have given it a new form which may in due course also come here. That’s part of the interest of it. You can see how the Tower of London has changed from century to century. Of course we don’t have its exact present form.’

“So we went off to see the Assyrian buildings, and I enjoyed it immensely;”

J. W. “As you are in with architects, do you ever come across a man called A?”

H. J. L. “ It’s funny you should inquire about him, for he was the man who made that remark about the houses.”

J. W. “About those you built?”

H.J.L. “Yes.”

J. W. “How is he getting on?”

H. J. L. “He’s in our set. He told me he was fearfully annoyed when he found he was with those who only, half-believed. He said to his teacher, ‘ But I did believe’

“His guide replied, ‘Had you really believed, you would not be here. Like many others, you thought you believed, but belief does not consist of merely saying “I believe.” You must truly grasp it. Had you really believed, you could not have lived the life you did. Plenty of people who thought they believed find themselves in Hell. A man’s belief must be shown forth in his life, or it is not real. This does not mean that a man who believes may not commit many grievous sins. He may. Nor yet does it mean that he will not suffer for them.

We are responsible for every thought and act; but still, belief must be real before it counts.'

" 'There is no deceiving anyone, not even one's own self, here. You half-believed, and are, therefore, in this part. Had you not believed at all, you would be in Hell. Now go and make progress.' "

J.W. "Is he?"

H. J. L. "Not very fast. You see, he was younger, and almost all his interests were physical-sports, good wine, women, and business. He died in the midst of them, and the earth pull is very strong. He is not earth-bound — no one here is — but still he does hanker after the earth. Why, he often plays truant and goes back to his old haunts and friends on earth. It's not with the same desires as the earth-bound go, hoping to be able to enjoy their old lusts, but with a kind of affection for old friends and places. I am really very sorry, for it throws him back terribly, and he's a very nice fellow. However, as he himself says, he died thirty years at least before his time, and I suppose he's got to spend that time before he'll be in the same position as those who died after their seventieth birthday.

"He told that to the master one day when he reprimanded him for playing truant.

"He's fearfully slow in class, can't grasp quite simple things; although he died so much earlier than I did, I've passed him already. But he's a jolly fellow, very popular out of school. He misses his games, though, terribly. He's got a vein of humor. He explained the other day that he prayed fervently that his wife might not die for many years, as he was afraid she would rout him out here.

"Now you have heard quite enough, or you'll want to stick here altogether."

We then began to walk back towards the avenue. Reaching there, we sat down, and I seemed to fall asleep. — J. W.

CHAPTER XI

HE ATTENDS HIS OWN FUNERAL

NINTH LETTER OF H. J. L.

At home (Glen House),Feb. 21ST, 7 p.m.

"After I had apparently been attending the school for a long time, my guide carne to me one day and said, 'It is time for you to go to your funeral!'

" 'My funeral!' I cried; 'I thought that had taken place ages ago.'

" 'Oh no! he replied; 'you have, according to our reckoning, been here quite a long time, but, according to earth time, you have only been here three days'

"This was the first time I realized the huge difference between our method of reckoning time, or rather, our escape from time, and your subservience to it. In those three earthly days I had made apparently many months' progress, had learnt much about spiritual things, and had seen numerous fine buildings of ancient days. At this point I should add that here there is nothing comparable to night and day, nor is there any sleep. This is, of course, evident if you think for a moment, for the spirit never sleeps even upon earth; it, unlike the body, needs no rest.

"Well, my guide told my master where I was going, and I was excused lessons. We were just going to begin work. I expect this sounds rather funny to you.

"Next moment we were at L.D. There was no long journey through the ether, as I imagined would be the case. Simply I found myself in my old bedroom. Of course it is now plainer to me.

"Our world and yours are not separated by anything akin to space.

"One might almost say they are both in the same space. But there, it is impossible to make this point quite plain to you, I fear.

"I, of course, noticed that the room was changed and the furniture out of its proper place, and then I noticed the coffin. It was covered by a large white sheet, but I could see through this, and perceived my body lying there.

"Strangely enough, it did not seem to have the attraction for me which I expected it would. I looked at it more as one might look at a marble sculpture than as at an old friend.

" 'You have finished your work and your day is done, old friend,' I murmured. Even as I thought this, another thought welled up. 'Were you really a friend or only a taskmaster? 'Now at any rate I was free, and I rejoiced.

"After a while I felt I should like to see what the others were doing.

“Next moment I was in the dining-room. It was so full that, to avoid touching the others, I stood in, or, rather, through the middle of the table. Of course it did not interfere with me in any way, nor, indeed, would their bodies, but yet some instinct, probably inherited from my earthly state, compelled me to avoid running into them. I saw them all — you, G., D., M., and Miss P.

“There did not seem to be much to learn there, so I drifted into the drawing-room, where my wife was, but soon drifted out.

“To tell the truth, I rather felt as if I was in the way, and wondered vaguely why I had been taken from school, where I was every day learning something new and interesting, to see these vacuities.

“My guide answered, ‘At the moment of burial the spirit always feels an inarticulate yearning to see its earthly shell and bid it farewell. There is a good reason for this, indeed, several. Besides the mere earthly attachment which all men feel for their bodies, akin to that usually felt by a dog for its master, even when that master was often cruel to it, there are the following: — At burials there are usually certain evil beings who hang round the corpse, hoping against hope, they know not always how, to draw some carnal satisfaction from the corpse, some touch of earthly lusts which still haunt it.’

“ ‘Occasionally, under exceptional circumstances, they may try, and even succeed, in drawing a kind of material body from the dead corpse by means of which to clothe their naked souls. This can only happen in the case of men who have lived evil lives. From this shame you are free; nevertheless, you and I go to see that nothing of evil shall approach what once held you.’

“ ‘Further, it is right that you should follow to its last resting-place a friend with whom you have been associated for so long.’

“ ‘Finally, by showing you the pettiness of the life you have left, to make you the more rejoice in that in which you now are.’

“After this I again returned and sat by my corpse; and presently you entered. I saw you remove the napkin and look at my face, but all the time I was standing opposite to you. I saw, rather to my surprise, how distressed you were, and tried to attract your attention, saying, ‘I am all right. Don’t you see me?’

“ ‘Once I thought you heard me, for you looked straight in my face for a moment; but you did not. Then, replacing the napkin and sheet, you turned and left the room.’

“Soon after, the undertaker’s men entered, and, having screwed down the lid, took the coffin downstairs. I went with the procession to the church.

“After the coffin had been lowered into the grave and you had all gone, I did not follow you, but waited by the grave till it was filled in. This completed, I looked at the marble statue which had once held me — I could, of course, see through the earth perfectly well — and then, turning to my guide, said, ‘Shall we now be going?‘

“The thought had hardly been formed when, lo! I was back in the school again, and oh! with what a sigh of relief! I looked round for my guide, but he had gone; but by now I had become accustomed to his strange comings and goings.

“ ‘Take your place,’ said my master kindly. ‘We have only had one round of questions.’

“ ‘*Only one round,*’ I thought, ‘yet I was on earth for hours. Indeed, there is no relation between time there and here.’

“My master seemed to divine my thoughts, for he answered at once’ You ought to know by now that here there is no such thing as time’

“I suppose it was having been back to earth that now made me feel just the least surprised at his answering a *thought* of mine.

“I again looked at the boys, and now realized for the first time how small and immature were the mortals whom I had just seen. These, at any rate, were boys, but they, for the most part, were the merest babes, some hardly born. I realized in particular, with mild surprise how infantile was the spirit in ——— and in ———. Yet though both were babes, there was some indescribable difference between them. When I saw you all, I saw your spiritual bodies through a grey sort of shadow — your earthly bodies — and often the largest and finest shadow bodies had the smallest and most misshapen and infantile spirit bodies.

“How glad I was to be back at school, back in the realities of life, away from all pettiness and futilities of what you call life on earth; but at the. same time a new desire had come upon me, and that was to let you and others know this fact.

“Rest half an hour. — H. J. L.”

CHAPTER XII

HE GOES TO COLLEGE

H. J. L.'s TENTH LETTER.

GLEN HOUSE, 8:50 p.m., Feb. 21st, 1914.

"To resume my narrative.

"After returning to school I felt strongly that I wanted to tell those I had seen what the real conditions over here were like, partly because I saw one or two were grieving rather, but more because they all either did not believe in a future life at all, or else had evidently wrong ideas as to what it was like over here. I have already told you of my fruitless endeavors to reach other members of the family, and how at length I got in touch with you. Now I will explain how I learnt that one could tell those still living. No sooner had the idea, come to me, than my guide entered the classroom.

" 'Your pupil has learnt his lesson so well,' he said to our master, 'that he can now leave school. He will go to a university instead.'

" 'He has made splendid progress,' said my master. 'Good; go forward, my lad.'

"Class was then dismissed, and all the other boys crowded round me.

" 'You have shot up, 'they said. 'Why, you are nearly a man!'

"Several others, I noticed, were also speaking to their guides, and it was quite a batch of us who said farewell to the building which had now become so familiar to us all.

"My guide then began to speak. 'You wish to communicate with those still living? Why?'

"I said, 'to tell them of this life, so that they may try and prepare themselves for it, so that they need not go through the elementary lessons which I had to learn. Many, too, who believe in a future life have no real idea as to what it is like'

" 'But why should you wish to speak to them? They will all come to us some day, and then they will *have* to learn.'

" 'Yes, but on earth I neglected these things, and now would make some little amends'

" 'This is a good reason, and truly they do need much light, and by helping them you will help yourself. Lo! You are now in the second instead of the first stage of this realm or set.'

“ ‘How can I do it? ’I said.

“ ‘That you must find out for yourself. We tell nothing here. Each soul must strive to answer his own questions, and if he really strives he will succeed.’

“Soon I found myself without my guide among a crowd of young men. We seemed to be in some university town. Several of the men drifted towards me, and, without the usual hesitation which I should have felt on earth, I asked what I could do to tell those on earth of this life.

“One of them replied, ‘We, too, are trying to find out how to do that very thing. Come with us.’

“We now searched throughout that large town, and at last found what we sought. Let me say here that the dominant note of the place, was the desire to help others who were already dead. At length we found a lecturer, as he would have been called on earth. But he did not lecture, but asked us questions, as the master had done.

“When we said, ‘How can we tell those still living?’

“He replied, ‘How do you do anything here?’

“ ‘By thinking about it.’

“ ‘You are answered.’

“ ‘We think then,’ I said, ‘that we wish to communicate with the living.’

“ ‘Naturally; how otherwise?’

“ ‘And do we think of one person or many?’

“ ‘Which you please, but which is easier — to think of one person or many persons’

“ ‘One’ we all cried together.

“ ‘Are there any other questions’ he asked?

“We had none then, so we went together to a sort of private study and there all concentrated our thoughts on this great matter. It sounds very simple to say ‘think of something,’ but in practice we found it terribly hard to concentrate on one sole thought. Other ideas would come floating in. We seemed to try this for weeks and weeks, but at length one man did get through.

“This encouraged us. Another who had been trying for some time said, ‘I wonder if the man I am thinking about is not receptive.’

"This started a long discussion, and we all agreed that probably it would be easier to get in touch with those who were not too materialistic. So, as we could not always tell who were the most materialistic, we decided to make such a list, and work through them by degrees. You know the rest. At length I got you.

That night I seemed specially drawn towards earth, I think now because it was just a week since I had died.

"I gradually became aware of the fact that I was drawing closer to you than I had yet done to the others, but it was not till you went to bed that I really got in touch with you. This taught me how to work, and, once started, things went easier. Finally, I met P., who told me how to try automatic writing. —Yours,

"H. J. L."

CHAPTER XIII

ANIMALS ON THE SPIRIT PLANE

TRANCE VISION OR CONVERSATION DURING NIGHT OF FEB. 23rd

I (J. W.) found myself seated by the edge of a beautiful lake. It reminded me at one time of Coniston, but next moment it seemed more like Lake Lucerne. H. J. L. was by me.

"Do you," I said," have houses to live in?"

"Yes," he replied. "I at present am living in college."

"Is it like any college which still exists?"

"I think," he replied, "that it is old Queen's College, Oxford, which was pulled down to make way for the present classical building."

J. W. "Did you know of the Requiem Mass which my father held for you on the day of the funeral? "

H. J. L. " Yes, but I did not know that it was on the same day. I knew of it what appeared to be some time before. That service was of far more use to me than the funeral service. It is strange that so many Christians devote all their attention to the body, which knows and cares nothing about what is going on, and entirely neglect the spirit, which is often in great need of help.

"I was going through one of those terrible days (of course they are not days, but I know no other name to give them for you) when my former deeds crowded upon me on every side. These 'days' come on me even still; they are part of my punishment, and are sent to enable me to repent. I, of course,

could not go to school, and was there overwhelmed with misery, when, lo! a bright flame seemed to force its way through my nightmare visions and dissolve them. Slowly in their place there came a vision of a church with an altar on which were candles and a cross, and before it was a priest. I recognized him as your father and, further, saw you kneeling there. But though you two were the only mortals, you were not alone. Who they were who knelt beside you I cannot say, but certainly the whole church, not merely the side chapel, was full of worshippers who had come from our side.

"No words of mine can express the joy that this sight filled me with. Firstly, I rejoiced that there were at least some on earth who really cared and believed enough to pray for me, and the thought and the words of the service filled me with a wonderful peace.

"But even beyond this came the inspiring thought that hundreds of others who had come here before, had possibly trodden the same hard road as I was treading, were interested in my progress and prayed for me. O Jack, I never knew how much good might be hidden in that wonderful contradictory old national church of ours! Tennyson must have received some inspiration from this side when he retained in his *Morte d'Arthur* those closing lines of Malory, clean contradictory as they must have been to the ideas of the Mid-Victorians 'Pray for my soul.' You know the rest, don't you?"

J. W. "Yes, well. By-the-bye, as animals come here, have you seen anything of old Molly?" (Carrie's dog.)

H. J. L. "Oh yes. She often comes to me, as there is no one else here she knows, I think. There she is."

J. W. "Where? I can't see her."

H. J. L. "Here she comes."

As he spoke. Molly came rushing out of a small wood close by. She looked somewhat younger than when she died and had quite lost her hump, but otherwise there seemed no change. She jumped and capered about, first round H. J. L. and then round me, wagging her tail and barking with excitement. I made her walk on her hind legs as she used to do. Presently she curled up beside H. J. L.

"If animals survive in this state," I asked, "what becomes of them when the frontier of this plane is reached? Do they, too, go on to the fifth plane?"

H. J. L. "That is one of the points we are investigating. I have particularly asked P. to inquire in his division. "This leads me to try and fix the terms I use

for our divisions here. I am afraid they have been a little incoherent. I will therefore use henceforth: —

"*Plane* = the whole of this realm of the spiritual body.

"*Realm* = the divisions of this plane, *e.g.* the realm of half-belief.

"*Division* = the divisions of each realm, *e.g.* the schools or the divisions of Hell.

"*Subdivisions* = the splitting up of the divisions as among the sects in the realm of belief without acts, *e.g.* the Roman Catholics or Baptists.

"*Spheres* = the groups into which we drift during the times we are having recreation. They bring together men in different divisions of the same realm, but not those who are in different realms. Moreover, a man will sometimes be in one sphere and sometimes in another, *e.g.* the sphere of architecture or music.

"Now, as to next Saturday's work, P. is very anxious to start writing, so I shall let him. He will give an account of his passing on to the realm above. Strictly, I ought to write first an account of the entrance of the officer into our realm as seen by me — it occurred first — and also what I know of P.'s passing, but I will do so after he has written. I will, however, tell you how I met P.

"I had been inquiring about the realm below and that above, and suddenly a man came to me and said:

" 'I have been down to Hell on a little missionary work, so perhaps I can give you some information.'

"I was delighted.

"He told me about the divisions of Hell, and that he had been sent to teach the souls in the schools. He was not allowed to go any lower, but even that had retarded his progress. He hoped, however, soon to be allowed to pass on to the realm above us. He said, further, that the souls in Hell were terribly hard to teach, far harder than the worst types of people on earth, and this in spite of the fact that none had reached the seventh division unless they desired to progress.

" 'If you really wish to know about the depths of Hell, I know the man who can tell you,' P. added.

'He was an army officer, and I have been teaching him for some time. He will soon be admitted into this realm, and I will introduce him to you and ask him to help you. I was privileged to help him and feel sure he will do what I wish in the matter. He is a man with a tremendous personality, and made good

progress. You may still think him a fairly unregenerate blackguard, but I assure you he is enormously improved. When he first came to me, he was by far the worst in the whole school, and I often wondered why he had been admitted, but he rapidly passed all the others'

" 'Are there schools like ours in Hell?' I said (H. J. L.).

" 'They are almost impossible to compare,' P. replied. 'The nearest simile which occurs to me is, as a school for mentally afflicted children is to a first class secondary school on earth. Even that does not show the full difference.'

" 'The schools for the babies, which I never entered, correspond fairly closely to the kindergartens on earth, though of course different subjects are taught.'

"Many other things P. described to me, and I have given you them from time to time. But I was not long to have the advantage of his company, for soon after the passing up to us of the officer, P.'s guide took him away for his final preparations for his own passing on.

"Before going, he obtained from his guide a promise that he might on occasion return to us, as he had gone down into Hell, to bring us the news we desired.

"Now I have given you enough. Consider me at the university with other students working at this subject which I have chosen, the subject being to discover all I can about the conditions of life here in all the realms, and to transmit this knowledge to you. Consider me surrounded by many fellow-students all working at the same problem, further, as having recreations and amusements approximating to those which are the highest on earth. All these mental amusements are carried on a far higher plane. There are also recreations of which you know nothing on earth.

"Now good-bye for the time being, Jack. Think of me and pray for help for me.

"See, I can fly now." He rose in the air and floated away across the lake, and I stood watching the rosy light of the over-setting sun tinging the waters of the lake. Then I knew no more. — J. W.

CHAPTER XIV

LITTLE BLANCHE SEES H. J. L.

BLANCHE SEES H. J. L. Feb. 26th, 1914

C. W. and Blanche were in the drawing-room at 7 p.m., and B. wandered up to the window and looked out at the sky from the darkened room. The sky was covered with stars. She exclaimed, "I see the big granddad crossing the sky! He's got a candle or torch in his hand with a star for the light. He keeps moving backwards and forwards. Now he has gone into a room and is learning something. He has a book."

Immediately after she said, "I can see him coming along again. A little girl is following him — like Betty (a six-year-old cousin), only she has reddish hair* She has a doll in her hand. Now he's talking to her and holding her hand."

Earlier she said, "He pulled me; I felt him."

Sometime later, about 7:45, C. W. and she went out in the garden to see the stars. She then said, "There is the big granddad; he has picked a bunch of stars. They are flowers to him, he's putting them in a vase."

(A correct summary. — C. W.)

CHAPTER XV

HOW H. J. L. MET 'THE OFFICER'

TRANCE VISION AND CONVERSATION, March 2nd, 1914.

During these I seem to be transferred to another country or plane of existence.

I found myself seated by the side of a river, and beside me was H. J. L.

"Carrie wants to know," I began," whether you can take off the clothes and, laying them aside, get into others? Do you understand my meaning? "

"Of course I perceive the idea in your mind. The clothes are made into their present form by my will. When I wish them to assume another shape, *e.g.* when I am on the earth plane and wish them to resemble my former earth clothes, they do so. I don't take them off and change them as you do on earth. Our clothes do not wear out, of course. They remain as we think them, and if we want to change them we think the change — and there are the new clothes."

J. W. “Blanche said she saw you picking stars, which were flowers to you. Was this so?”

H. J. L. “I often pick flowers, and I suppose they looked as bright as stars to her, and she mixed them up with the stars, which she saw with her mortal sight, as distinct from her spiritual sight, with which she sees me.”

J. W. “Do you know who the little red-beaded girl is?”

H. J. L. “She has just come here, and I happened to see her looking rather lonely, and so began to interest myself in her. She’s gone up to the girls’ schools here.”

J. W. “Oh, then they don’t have co-education?”

H. J. L. “Not exclusively, though they have it for some children. You see, here like attracts like.”

J. W. “Have you seen many women?”

H. J. L. “Not many as yet. Later we see more of them. Now I’ll go on with my narrative.”

J. W. “Before you do so, tell me, don’t the flowers die when you pick them? “

H. J. L. “Oh no, why should they? They are forms, and still retain those forms even if picked. They are simply transferred from the plant to my vase. But they do not die in the vase any more then when they are on the plant.”

J. W. “If you pulled them to pieces, would they perish? “

H. J. L. “We should never do such a thing; we realize that even the flowers have their rights. Nevertheless the separate pieces would still exist, and would reunite.

“Now for my narrative. A few days after I had met P., my guide took me to see the passing up to us of a soul from Hell, and his guide went with me, and we found it was the officer.

“I find it hard to make you understand how we got there, but suddenly we were at the edge of Hell. We seemed to be on a dry, barren, rocky edge. Behind us were black rocks and hard, stony ground. The ground, which sloped up towards us from behind, in front of us broke off abruptly.

“Now this terrible precipice was made far more awful by the fact that at its edge all light ceased. The light seemed to become tiny particles of mist, and at the very edge these seemed to pile themselves up into a great wall against the darkness. There was no intermingling of light and dark, as on earth, simply

this awful darkness, which seemed as if it were a solid curtain, or even a wall against which the light piled itself up but could not penetrate.

“My guide spoke ‘Go to the uttermost edge of that rocky cliff and stretch out your hand into the darkness’

“I went to the edge, and as I did so I felt the hand of my guide resting on my shoulder from behind to steady me.

“My hand went into the darkness and was immediately lost to sight. I could see my arm as far as the part where it entered the darkness, but beyond I could see nothing. Nor could I feel any sensation in the hand, save only at the place where it entered the darkness. It was more than the darkness which can be felt; it was the darkness which destroys feeling.

“At the part where my arm entered the darkness I felt a narrow band of intense cold, numbing and yet burning.

“ ‘May I withdraw my arm?’ I asked my guide.

“ ‘Yes’

“I promptly withdrew it, and was really thankful to find it was undamaged.

“ ‘Why this darkness and cold?’ I inquired.

“My guide replied, ‘The light of faith does not exist here, and there is also no love of God.

“ ‘As you are now a spirit, you need the spiritual light and warmth, just as on earth you needed physical warmth and light.’

“Slowly the wall of darkness began to sway to and fro. As it advanced towards the light in one place it receded in another, and the light pressed in and out. There was no interpenetration, simply an undulating line instead of a straight one. As this movement grew more and more violent I sprang back from the cliff, fearing that a fold of darkness might engulf me.

“But my guide said, ‘stand firm. That darkness cannot reach us; there is too much faith here’ And so it was, for though the folds of darkness several times swept up on to the land on either side of the spot where we were standing, it never engulfed us, and we were able to realize the awful depth of the precipice, which seemed almost unscaleable. But the light gave comparatively little illumination.

“Suddenly out of the darkness beneath us a ball of light began to emerge, and, rapidly mounting, we saw it was a glorious spirit of light. As he rose from the depths the darkness seemed to fall from off him, to use a homely simile, like water from a duck’s back.

“Having, climbed over the edge of the cliff on to its top, he lay down and stretched his arm down into the darkness. It vanished up to the shoulder; but gradually he withdrew it, and soon we saw his hand grasped that of another. The newcomer’s hand was not bright and shining like his, but dark and dirty, with a pallid, unhealthy tinge.

“Soon there struggled up beside him, slowly and painfully, a most miserable object. His eyes were covered with a kind of bandage. He fell to the ground beside his guide, who rose to his feet and gently helped him to rise.

“The newcomer wore a dark grey ragged garment, which was covered with stains, and seemed to have, as it were, patches of darkness still clinging to it. His hands and face were also stained and dirty.

“ ‘Oh, this terrible light,’ he moaned. ‘I can see it even through this bandage’

(To us it was a very murky light, most like that seen in a London fog.)

“ ‘How foul his clothes are!’ I said to P.

“ ‘To us, yes; but if he could see them they would to him appear unwontedly clean,’ said P. ‘I expect to you your clothes appear quite clean?’

“ ‘Yes’ I replied.

“ ‘Well, I can see many stains on them, and I have no doubt to *my* guide mine also appear foul.’

“I felt very humbled by this remark and remained silent.

“P. stepped forward, and, taking the newcomer by the hand, said, ‘Welcome. I am happy indeed in being allowed to greet you on your entrance into this new realm.’

“ ‘Is that you, my master?’ said the other. ’It is indeed good of you to come and welcome me. But this light is terrible. I long for the darkness again!

“ ‘Oh, that will soon affect you less. This is a friend of mine who has come to welcome and help you! and he signed to me.

“I took the other hand of the man, whom henceforth I shall call by the name of *The Officer*, by which you already know him.

“We led him slowly down the slope and then seated ourselves on the ground. Here he told me who he was on earth (which I have repeated to you briefly) and something of his life in Hell. The latter I shall not give you now, as he will give it himself in due course. We stayed like this for a long time; it seemed equal to several days, but at length, when he had told us much about himself, his guide spoke.

“ ‘By telling your evil life and something of what you have suffered, you have made it possible for your eyes to bear the light without the bandage’

“He then removed it, and the officer sank to the ground and covered his eyes with his hand.

“My guide then spoke ‘We must now return.’

“ ‘What of the officer?’ I inquired.

“ ‘He will follow us, but more slowly. *He* cannot fly yet, but will have to climb painfully up to us.’

“We then rose in the air. P. and I, in what seemed no time, were back in these now familiar surroundings. I gather from the officer, who arrived a short time later (it seemed like a few days), that he had had to cross a kind of stony desert which mounted up to a range of hills. When he had climbed to the crest of these, he found they sloped down but slightly towards a plain, and that plain was where we dwell.

“While crossing this plain, he was haunted by the most awful visions of his former evil life, similar to, but far more intense and terrible than, those I saw and suffered from. His guide came to him but rarely, and though to us we seemed to have parted from him but a few days, as it were, to him it seemed years. The visions haunt him even as they do me, but far more fiercely, and as yet they are still in the nightmare state which I described as assailing me at first. They have not yet sorted themselves out, as they did for me. He has, therefore, of course not yet started going to school. In short, he is only just in our realm.

“This now enables you to understand the spiritual condition of the three persons who are trying to communicate with you from here. I feel that you cannot realize how intense all these experiences are. For example, the awful horror of that darkness I cannot convey to you, and even if I did, you could not convey it to others on earth. It was a horror which seemed to choke and freeze me. It was awful beyond measure.”

CHAPTER XVI

GUARDIAN ANGELS

H. J. L. (continued). “Now, is there any point you wish to raise? “

J. W. “This is the third time I have seen this landscape, but I have never seen your guide. Is he never with you when I am here? “

H. J. L. ‘Not always, but he is here at times. He is now. — Oh, my guide and friend, open his eyes still wider.”

Then something was placed over my eyes for a moment, and I could see nothing. The “something” was removed, and, behold, I could see more clearly. Behind H. J. L. stood a great spirit form made of light. His robes kept changing color and seemed to run through all the colors of the rainbow. He was far taller than H. J. L, and large in proportion, being perfectly made. He was at least three times as large as H. J. L., and his face was more beautiful than any Greek sculpture — strong, noble, well-cut features — there was nothing feminine about it. Yet it was a kind, as well as a strong face. It was a face that was neither old nor young. Nor did it seem to have color (*e.g.* brown hair) as we understand it, but rather to be a figure of golden light. Yet there was both hair on the head and beard, majestic and flowing. No words can describe the majesty and beauty of this being. I can quite understand whence the ancients drew their inspirations for their gods. Then I thought, “This is doubtless an angel,” and I looked instinctively for his wings, but he had none.

“Have I not a guide?” I inquired. Like the tones of a great bell rang out the word “Behold!” Then I saw that behind me was another great spirit of light. Now, though in general aspect he resembled the guardian angel of H. J. L., I perceived that I knew this spirit. His face seemed hauntingly familiar. Yet it was an extraordinarily mobile face, the same, yet ever-changing, never for an instant exactly the same, and yet always retaining certain characteristics. It was different too, markedly, from the guide of H. J. L. I knew this being of light. I felt almost as if I had seen him in my dreams, but that the dreams had been forgotten. He, too, had a beard, but not so long as that of H. J. L.’s guide, and, like him, was of far more than human size. Light seemed to emanate from his whole body. He raised his hand, and that same glorious bell-like voice spoke.

“Enough! It is not well that you should see more!”

Again the hand (for so I now perceived it to be) was placed over my eyes, and when it was removed I could see only H. J. L. and the landscape.

“We must part now,” he said, and, rising, floated away from me.

I stood looking at the beautiful landscape, lost in contemplation. Gradually I became aware of a sensation of something pulling me. In spite of strong resistance on my part, I felt myself drawn backwards as if by an invisible cord. Step by step I seemed to move uphill and away from the stream, then there was darkness. When I next became conscious, I was back in my house.

CHAPTER XVII

BLANCHE SEES H. J. L. AND MOLLY

CLAIRVOYANT APPEARANCE OF H. J. L. TO BLANCHE AND J. W. AT 6 P.M., MARCH 3rd

While at tea Blanche suddenly said, “Why, there’s Granddad!”

“Show him to me,” I said. “I can’t see him.”

She went to the dining-room window, the one looking east, and said, “I shan’t show him to you, or he’ll go away.”

While we were talking I began to perceive something some distance away, and soon saw H. J. L. I asked Blanche what she saw, as I saw him. She said he was in a room typing, that Rosy Dawn (the little girl) was playing on the floor. “Now she’s going out at the door carrying her doll. Why, there’s a brown poodle with her!”

“Yes,” I said, “it’s Molly. Don’t you recognize her?”

“Yes, it’s Molly, mother,” she cried.

The vision grew faint and faded away. I saw exactly the same as she did, but H. J. L. had his back towards me, and was certainly doing something with his hands, but I don’t think it was typewriting. The child had seen her other grandfather typing, and not knowing what H. J. L. was doing, interpreted his action by that of my father’s.

This vision was different from other appearances to me of H. J. L. It was at a distance, and appeared, as she said, to be in the sky. All others have been near to me. Only on Monday I had said to C. W., “I wish I could be present next time B. says she sees anything.” I think this was the answer.

CHAPTER XVIII

MEN ARE SELF-JUDGED

TRANCE CONVERSATION WITH H. J. L. DURING NIGHT OF MARCH 9th

I found myself in a forest glade, and seated beside me was H.J.L. He said: "I think it would be as well at this point to clear up once and for all the exact relationship of Faith and works.

"Faith must be shown forth in works. If a man really believes the teaching of Christ, for example, he will strive to follow it out in his life.

"A man who says with his lips that he believes that teaching and then goes on day by day breaking all the moral laws that Christianity teaches is simply a humbug.

"I do not mean by this the man who, though he strives, often gives way to temptation. For that man there is the realm which I call the realm of belief without acts; but I do mean the hundreds of professing Christians who make no attempt to carry out Christ's teaching, the men who go to church regularly on Sunday and spend the week in cheating and lying and so forth.

"These go to Hell. They have not believed, and their evil life proves it."

J. W. "Wherein, then, does this differ from being judged solely by our acts?"

H. J. L. "Firstly, the word judged is misused. It implies that someone outside ourselves judges us. This is not so; we stand self-condemned. Our spirit cannot rise to higher realms than those for which it has fitted itself. There is no necessity to enforce any law, for the law is self-acting. I shall make this point plain if I answer your question. The difference lies in this. Suppose a complete materialist, one who neither believes in God nor in a future life, and one who does his best to dissuade others from believing in these essentials. This man may be a real philanthropist, actuated by a noble desire to promote the material well-being of his fellow-men. This man dies. How can he come even to the realm of half-belief? His spiritual body has never been developed. He could not bear the light. He must develop this spiritual body and lose the materialistic ideas before he can possibly come to us. No hard judge dooms him to Hell. He goes there naturally of his own accord. Like attracts like. His lack of faith bars him out from all realms in which faith is an essential element of existence.

"He goes therefore to division five of Hell; but, though there was no love of God, there was of his fellow-men, and this will save him from sinking lower and help him to desire to rise.

“Once the desire to progress in spiritual matters does appear, that progress will probably be sure and continuous; but unfortunately the materialistic mind remains materialistic after death. Often it denies that it is dead, and considers its psychic or its spiritual body to be a physical body, so that it is still alive on earth. Even when it realizes it has passed through death, it may still deny there is a God and refuse to listen to any who could teach it. Thus it will remain in Hell.

“Nevertheless the number of good materialists is far smaller than most people would suppose. Even on earth many a man who outwardly poses as a materialist in his heart of hearts really believes and comes to our realm.

“Further, after death such a man usually remains for a considerable time in his psychic body, and the conditions of life on that plane (*i.e.* the astral) soon convinces most men of some at east of the most elementary spiritual truths.

“While on the subject of the psychic body, let me draw your attention to the fact that you have misunderstood the seventh plane in my chart. You have understood it as the earth on which you are now living.”

“It is really the *earth plane,* and can be separated broadly into the division of the incarnate and of the discarnate spirits.

“The former are of course yourselves, the latter the earth-bound, and also a crowd of other organisms, such as elementals, empty psychic bodies, and so forth. The dead man first passes through this stage, and only when he has dropped his psychic body can his spiritual body enter the sixth plane, even Hell.

“I was but a brief space in it, and must have dropped my psychic body. almost before I realized I had one. I believe it took place as soon as the bedroom gave way to this beautiful scenery.

“The officer, however, spent a long time in the psychic body, and has a very clear recollection of dropping it.

“I hope I have now made plain the relation between faith and conduct.

“Now go to sleep,” and, standing in front of me (J. W.), he made a number of passes, and I sank into oblivion.

CHAPTER XIX

THE SCHOOL FOR THE REGENERATE IN HELL

TRANCE VISION, Monday, March 16th, 1914.

I seemed to be rushing through space at a tremendous speed, and then I found myself standing beside H. J. L. We were standing on a hillside, and below me, among the trees, I saw the towers and roof of a large building. It had quads and open grounds round it like a college.

"What is that building?" I asked.

"That is the college in which I at present live. It is the form of the building which was Queen's, Oxford, before the present classical building was put up."

J. W. "Can I go and look over it?"

H. J. L. "Perhaps at another time, but not now. I wish to tell you about my experiences in the schools of Hell.

"I was first taken to the schools of those who have progressed from the lower depths of Hell. You remember my chart?"

J. W. "Yes, I remember there were two divisions of the topmost division, the one you mention and the babes' school. I have seen a vision of the latter."

H. J. L. "Well, I went first to the other schools, but have since been to the babes' school.

"My guide said, 'It is well that you should go to see the work in the schools'

"Next moment we were standing on the bare rocky ground, as real to us as the earth-world is to you. Again before us rose that terrible wall of darkness; but there was this difference — that at one place a rough track seemed to be worn away which led into the darkness.

" 'How was it,' I inquired, 'that the officer did not come out by this route? It is far easier than the way by which he emerged.'

" 'The road into Hell is always easy,' my guide replied. 'the road out of Hell is always hard. This you should surely know.'

" 'Shall we have to climb up that awful precipice?'

" 'No, we go down into Hell, but do not become part of Hell. Hell is a state, not a place, and thus, though we perceive others in that state, and perceive also the evil atmosphere they draw around them, we do not ourselves partake of that state. In this world, where thoughts and forms are as real as the physical is on the earth, we can only feel the evil effects of Hell by becoming

part of it. That, unfortunately, is possible. Many a soul who has come here with the desire to do good has fallen and become a part of Hell, just as on earth men who go to work among the fallen, alas! may be led astray by those whom they come to save. If that should happen to you, then you would be unable to return by this road, and would have to climb up the precipice!

“I became afraid and cried, ‘Don’t go. Let me not risk it. I am safe where I am.’

“But he answered, ‘Here there is no standing still. You must progress either upwards or downwards, and this journey must be taken. But fear not, am I not with you? Moreover, spirits do not fall in this division of Hell. Here the worst is past. It is when they go down to the lower divisions of Hell that the danger arises’

“Thus encouraged, we began to descend the path, and the dread darkness closed over us.

“For a moment I felt appalled, but the firm grip of my guide’s hand gave me strength and encouragement. Then I began to perceive that from him, and to a lesser extent from me, there flowed out a kind of light which enabled us to proceed along the path, though we were unable to see much on either side at any distance.

“Suddenly we were aware of a great building set right across our path, and we found that the road we were walking upon ran under a doorway into it. There was no way round it, for on either side I found the walls of rock towered up and were absolutely unscaleable.

“ ‘What is this place’ I inquired.

“ ‘Enter and see’ replied my guide.

“We entered the archway, and it seemed as if our presence was already known, for at once a door opened and we passed into a covered courtyard.

“What a dazzling light! After the awful darkness through which we had passed, I felt dazed for a moment, but soon I was able to realize everything.

“Around me were tall buildings on four sides, rather like a great college quad, except that it was much higher and there was a roof instead of open sky.

“There appeared to be several stories, for there were several rows of windows, and from every one of these a soft light shone. Some light, too, seemed to come from the building itself: I mean from its very walls.

“Then I noticed a spirit standing by the door. I knew at once that he was of the same nature as I myself, though more advanced: I mean he was not like my guide who is far above me.

“I therefore inquired of him, ‘What is this building?’

“He replied, ‘It is a house of refuge, a school and a guard-house combined. One might call it ‘a missionary clearing house’. To us come down, from the realms above, spirits who desire to help the unfortunate beings in Hell. Back to us come those messengers of hope who have been down to Hell. To us come all those who, having begun to progress, need helping upwards; and, finally, hither come those who need only to be taught, that they may leave Hell altogether for the realm above.

“ ‘Besides these duties, we also bar the way, so that none of the inhabitants of Hell may attempt to reach the realm above save by the hard path which is ordained for them. The road you have trod is for those beings in that realm who desire to do good in. Hell, or such as you, who are brought here by their guides to enable them to learn about Hell. There are other rest-houses scattered along the paths which lead out of Hell, to which those who desire to progress may go, but. this is the great clearing house, or perhaps I might call it the base of supplies for a large number of these houses of refuge. Have I made myself dear?’

“ ‘Perfectly,’ I (H. J. L.) replied. ‘This house sends out men to relieve those in charge of these “houses of rest,” and also those missionaries who try to persuade men to come to these houses. You further act as the final “house of rest” for those who are about to attempt the climb up the precipice. But where do the schools come in?’

“*He*. ‘Your first remarks are quite correct, but the latter are not so plain.’

“ ‘All in this part have to pass through the school before they can climb the precipice, as otherwise they would be hopelessly lost on reaching the top. But before they can attend the school, they have to be received into the part of the building which is the “house of rest.” Here they gain spiritual strength as distinct from spiritual knowledge.’

“ ‘Just as on earth you often have to nourish the children’s bodies before you can teach them, so here we have to build up their spiritual strength — one might almost say their spiritual bodies — before attempting to instruct them.’

“ ‘Compare our work with that of some of the societies on earth who rescue waifs and educate them. If you add to that the fact that the children are mostly crippled, and also mentally afflicted, you will get a very fair parallel.’

“ ‘At times it is almost heart-breaking, far worse than slumming on earth. Oh, how bitterly we blame those who should have done this kind of work on earth! A man is much harder to convert here.’

“ ‘Often after a man’s spiritual strength has been developed, we find he is not yet ready to acquire spiritual knowledge in the school. He sometimes runs away, and is only brought back after much search and labor. Often, alas! he sinks back for a time into his old ways, and returns to one of the lower divisions of Hell. Others we have to send out on journeys, and employ them in various ways till they are ready to learn.’

“*H. J. L.* ‘May I go into the House of Rest and see what it is like for myself? ‘I inquired.

“My guide replied, instead of the man at the door, ‘Not yet, but you shall at another time. We will now enter the school. You will find it more in consonance with your previous knowledge, as you went to the secondary school in the realm above. The *House of Rest* would be so unlike anything of which you are as yet aware that you would miss many things which would be of value.

“ ‘After seeing these schools, and also those for the babes, you will be able to appreciate things more when you come to visit the House of Rest.’

“We passed through a Late Perpendicular archway, and, as we did so, I realized that the place was a castle as much as a college. Indeed, I found that there were no external windows at all, for these would have admitted only darkness, which is here more than the absence of light, being in itself a tangible thing.

“The only window was one which served as a light to guide the wanderers outside to this harbor of refuge. The way this ’light’ was ’trimmed’ will astonish you. The room into which it opened was the private chapel of the men and women (for there were women here) who ministered in this place. It was distinct from the chapel for the school or the one for the House of Rest.

“This window was behind the altar, and on earth would have been called the east window. It had, however, no stained, but merely white transparent glass.

“Before this altar the service of the Holy Communion was always being offered up. No sooner was one service ended than a new priest began a new service, and a fresh body of worshippers took up the responses.

Thus ever, there goes up prayer for the salvation of those in Hell. Out of the east window, no big one, streams out the light of faith generated by this ceaseless service of prayer, and intercession.

“How it is in the other frontier houses, I cannot say for certain, but I gather that some are in the hands of men who — on earth held other religious views, and in these service of intercession takes other forms than that I witnessed.

Like attracts like, you see, and my guide naturally took me to the house in which I should find the system most in consonance with that to which I more or less belonged on earth.

“Similarly, some souls in Hell are drawn towards salvation by the men who belong to this house, while others go to those in which Mohammedanism or Non-conformity is dominant.

“But there is no bitterness here. Each house does its work, and helps other houses when it can. Thus, if a Mohammedan or Nonconformist missionary were to find a man and help him, if he saw that that man’s spiritual development would be quicker if he went to the house belonging to the church people, he would take him there. So, too, with the church missionaries. Moreover, this transference of rescued is constantly taking place.

“We do not worry about our religious — save the word — differences here. They still exist to a limited degree, but we know that as we mount higher all that is false will fade, while only the truth will remain. So we go quietly on our way.

“This light shining from this solitary window at the top of the building is a beacon of hope far down into Hell. All the Houses of Rest, even the little ones scattered lower down in Hell, each has its beacon thus kept ever burning.

“Having entered the building, we passed down a passage and through a door into a classroom. This was filled with light from the teacher; but what shall I say of the pupils? Picture the lowest and most degraded men reduced to the size of tiny children. Imagine them misshapen and idiots for the most part, with a low, cunning expression on their wizened faces. This will give you but a faint idea of what I saw. They were ever trying to play some stupid trick or other either on their neighbors or on the master. In addition to him, there were two other spirits who stood behind the form while he taught from the front.

“These three were needed, firstly, to keep the room sufficiently light, for from each of the ‘children’ there seemed to exude a kind of darkness which appeared to be burnt up by the light. Further, they were needed to keep the pupils under control. They did this solely by a kind of hypnotic power, by the exercise of their will and of their mentality. If for a moment they relaxed their concentration, at once several of the boys broke out into disorder.

“ ‘This work must be very wearying’ I said to my guide.

“ ‘It is,’ he replied. ‘The teachers have to be relieved after a very short spell. That is why so large a number of spirits are needed even in this single institution.’

“ ‘Are the girls taught separately?’ I inquired.

“ ‘Yes, nearly always. They need women, and these need men. Further, we do not find it wise to let the sexes mix much here. These are not innocent babes, you must remember. Though they have the spiritual development of children, they have the memories of vicious men and women. In the school for the real babes, women almost always teach and tend them, and we make practically no distinction between the two sexes.’

“Just then three fresh teachers came in and took the place of those who were in the room when we entered.

“We waited for the new lesson to begin. At once a perfect pandemonium broke out, due to the withdrawal of one group of mental influences, but almost at once the newcomers by the simple power of their will had reduced the rebels to submission.

“ ‘There is no room for weak disciplinarians here,’ I remarked.

“ ‘You mean for men of weak will. No, and there is very little room for them anywhere over here. If a soul is weak-willed when it comes, it has to develop its will power at once; it will make no real progress till it does. That is one of our most difficult problems in these schools. Most of these fallen ones are pitiably weak-willed, though passionate enough.’

“Then the lesson began. It was similar in its methods to that under which I learnt at my school, but what a difference in the subject matter! The truths their instructor tried to teach them were the simple, elementary, and obvious truths which we learn when we are children on earth. To these unfortunate creatures, however, they seemed terribly hard. Patiently he went over the same things again and again, but many seemed quite unable to grasp any ideas at all.

“ ‘It must take an endless age to teach some of these,’ I said to my guide.

“ ‘Almost endless’ he replied. ‘There are some who have been here for thousands of years as you reckon time. They have even lost their memories’

“ ‘But what good does it do if they are so hopeless as that?’

“ ‘All the time’ he replied, ‘they are learning discipline, and that is much. Sooner or later they will learn other things. There is always hope; and time — what is it? It is an invention of men on earth which, fortunately, has never

reached here. This is some of the finest work done in this *Land of the Undying,* but it is very exacting work.'

" 'We will now visit the girls' class: really, of course, they are degraded women who are striving to make progress, but they are harder to control than the boys.'

"As he spoke we left the room, and, passing along several long passages, came to another classroom.

"On entering this, I found it was a class of girls, with three women teachers; but I had hardly time to take it all in before a tremendous uproar broke out, and several little girls rushed up to me. Now, although I usually like children, I felt an instinctive shrinking from these vicious women in their immature Bodies. I felt there was nothing really childlike in them.

"I tried to shake them off, but they clung so close that I thought I should never be able to get away from them. But the school-mistresses, having by now reduced the others to order, at length fetched away those who were clinging to me.

" 'You see how strong still their old vicious habits are, and how weak their wills. Your entrance has completely upset them merely because you are a man.'

" 'It is terrible,' I replied. 'But how do you manage to keep them here at all? Do you do it by force? For their wills are so weak that they cannot possibly keep even to the idea of progressing for long.'

"He replied, 'No force, as you understand the word, is employed, but, at the same time, we exert all our influence to keep them on the right path. Their very weakness helps us once we have got them here. They find it very difficult to make up their minds to go away, and so remain and learn. Still, of course, some do go back to wallow in the mire.'

"I noticed that the mistress was unable to make much progress owing to our presence, which distracted the little girls' attention. I was therefore not surprised when my guide said:

" 'We will be going. You have seen enough now.'

"After leaving this classroom, we went up many flights of stairs till we at length reached the top story. Here we entered the chapel, and the light of faith was so intense that I could only bear it for a very short time. As I have already described to you what happens there, I shall not do so again.

"Soon after we left the House of Rest and toiled, slowly up the road by which we had entered Hell.

"Once back on the ground above and out of that horrible darkness, we rested for but a short time, and then seemed to be wafted through the air in an instant back to this part of our realm.

"Now," said H. J. L., "I must be leaving you."

He rose and floated away, and gradually the landscape became dark and indistinct. Then I sank into oblivion.

CHAPTER XX

HE VISITS THE SCHOOL FOR THE BABES WHO KNEW NOT FAITH

LETTER FROM H. J. L. March 21st, 1914.

"A short time after the visit to the school of those who are progressing, I was taken to the school of the babes.

"Again I went down a kind of road with my guide into the darkness, and as before found a building right across it. On entering this I found a courtyard, not so high as the other one, but much larger. In it were all manner of trees and flowers, and a pretty sparkling fountain. Here numbers of children were playing about.

"These were far different from those I had seen before. Their young baby faces corresponded to their immature bodies. They were like earth children for the most part, and — not like those men in the form of children whom I had seen on my last visit to Hell. These were they who had never sinned —, but not having any knowledge of God or Faith, have to learn of these, and as they learn their little spiritual bodies develop until it is time for them to pass on to the realm of. half-belief, when they go to the secondary schools. Rosy Dawn is an example, and well known to you.

"Now this school was under the control of Sister Maria, who has often spoken through you, and as she has given you many details, I shall not repeat them, only adding what I consider necessary to complete the picture.

"I should add that I had particularly asked to be taken to this school rather than any other, as Rosy Dawn had come from it, and also Sister Maria.

"On entering one of several doors which opened into the quad, I found we were in a kind of *crèche,* where all the immature and premature children went.

“ ‘How soon may it be said that a soul comes into existence when a child is conceived?’ I inquired. ‘It is evidently not at birth.’

My guide replied, ‘Even I cannot tell you the precise moment when the soul enters the fleshy home which clothes it, but it is extraordinarily early. As soon as the germ has definitely ceased to be a germ and has begun to grow into a human body, a soul enters it. But we do not know how God performs this wonder. That is hid, even from us to whom much is plain. Of this at least you can be sure – that long before the child “quickens,” a soul has become enshrined in it.’

“I now directed my attention to the scene around me, and saw that the *creche* was full of gentle, sweet-faced women who watched over the little immature atoms. We passed to other rooms, and found that in each new one the babes were more advanced than in the last. At length we reached a long room with a table down the middle. This was the one you saw in the mirror, and I gathered it was the ‘top form’ of the school.

“Here I met Sister Maria, whom I greatly liked, but found she was so much more spiritual than I that it was difficult to keep in touch with her. ‘Do you have a chapel with continuous service?’ I asked.

“ ‘Oh yes’” she replied... “‘Work and pray.” You know the old monastic proverb.’

“My guide spoke: ‘There is no arrangement here for the light from the chapel being sent out like a beacon, as in the other house. This is not a House of Refuge, and no lost souls from Hell come here to pollute this happy spot. The children are borne here by their guides or guardian angels, who, though they have no work to do on earth, yet have the same sort of work as any of us here. Generally, if possible, a relative of the “dead” child is brought, if suitable, to mother it; but, alas, many have no such relatives here. They (the relatives) are often too evil to be permitted to help. No evil thing is admitted within these walls, although it stands in Hell.

“ ‘Here, you see, there is no need to have separate religious houses. These children carry no pre-conceived ideas of religion with them, and have nothing to unlearn. This is but one of the many points in which they differ from the others. Hence here we find Roman Catholics, Churchmen, and Nonconformists all joining in the good work.’

“*I.* ‘And who are the women who do this work?’

“*He.* ‘Except those who are related to the children, they are those who, loving children much, yet for some reason had none, or lost them in early childhood.’

"I perceived that even these children had their little naughty ways as on earth, though to a less degree.

"My guide said: 'this must be so. If they were incapable of evil, where would free will be? But it will never develop to any considerable extent here, and soon will vanish as they progress. You, too, can sin after death, but whereas theirs is the seed of evil, yours — is the fruit, and now difficult to destroy. Now let us away.'

"So again I scaled the path which leads out of Hell.

"Good-bye! — H. J. L."

CHAPTER XXI

HE VISITS THE GREAT HOUSE OF REFUGE IN HELL

TRANCE VISION AND CONVERSATION DURING NIGHT OF 23rd MARCH 1914

I found myself standing beside H. J. L. on an expanse of open down. He said: "I have recently been to see the House of Refuge. You will remember that I was not allowed to see over that at first?"

J. W. "Yes, I remember perfectly."

H. J. L. "Well, having come down through the darkness by a road such as those I have previously described, but not the same as either, I entered the roofed — in courtyard as before. There was a school here also, but this time I crossed the quad at an angle, and passing under a Classical or Renaissance doorway, entered a passage. I should say that this building was in the Renaissance, not the Perpendicular, style.

"From the passage we passed through a door into a large room which was empty save for a few couches and a table in the centre.

"My guide spoke:

" 'This room forms the anteroom for the school. Those spirits who are ready to be taken in are admitted here. They are often very weak, and at first are placed under the guidance and control of a special teacher. He or she watches over them for the whole time, and only after awhile are they deemed sufficiently strong to attend the proper classes. They need individual attention at first.'

" 'Are they kept here for the whole time?'

" 'No. This is the room which connects up school and refuge home. It's a sort of isolation ward. After a time, as soon as they are strong enough to get about

properly, they are taken to a sort of study, one for each pupil and his teacher. See!'

"He led me out of the room into the corridor and through a doorway opposite. Here I found a much smaller room, and in it was a bright male spirit and on a couch a small misshapen child. The bright spirit was playing on a harp a beautiful soothing hymn.

" 'Music soothes pain, and that unfortunate one is suffering terrible mental pain,' said my guide.

"We entered another 'study,' and here another exhausted spirit was being treated.

" 'What is he doing?' I asked, indicating the bright spirit who was making signs over the body of the patient.

"My guide replied, 'He is lending him some of his magnetic fluid. The patient is weak in will-power, and this spirit is treating him. The method is analogous to that of the magnetic-healer on earth.'

"We then returned to the 'anteroom' and passed through a door at the opposite end. This led into the House of Refuge proper.

"We found ourselves in a kind of hospital ward. There were no bedclothes on the beds, if so I can call The extraordinary thing about it was that the children who were nearest the door through which we had entered were by far the most active and strong; yet they were the smallest. As we moved toward* the opposite end of the dormitory, where there was another door, I noticed that the children grew larger and larger, but at the same time they seemed man flabby, dark, and indistinct.

"My guide said, 'I will explain this difficulty to you. These spirits when in Hell appeared tall — fixed and strong. The more evil they were the stronger they were. Their spiritual bodies were made of evil and darkness, just as ours are of goodness and light.

When, however, they begin to repent and come here, the evil principle within them grows weaker and weaker, and as it does so the real spiritual body develops slowly.

" 'Thus at first these rescued spirits grow weaker and weaker, and then they become "as little children" in very truth. Once this has happened, they are able to go on to the school where they begin to grow again, though often very slowly.'

“I asked, ‘But where do they get this element of light from which the spiritual body develops’

“He replied, ‘Even in Hell men retain some little spark of spiritual truth. They cannot help it, for it is implanted by God. It is the Divine element in all, which, however much it may be submerged, can never be quite extinguished. Even in Hell men learn in spite of their evil will. Thus they learn that death does not end life; often they wish it did,

“ ‘Once they begin to grow better, they grow weaker, and so Hell becomes more and more hateful to them. For in Hell the strongest is he who is most wicked: and the strongest oppresses and cruelly ill-treats those who are weaker than he, and there is no death to intervene’

“ ‘Is there pain, then, in Hell?’ I inquired.

“ ‘Yes; only it is mental and spiritual suffering, but to the souls *there* it is as real as physical suffering is on earth, just as here the earth on which we stand, though immaterial to the physical world, seems real and material to us. Yes, they suffer, but no friendly death comes to end the anguish of the wretched victims.

“ ‘The old descriptions of Hell, though to the modern world they seem gross and materialistic, in reality were not so very inaccurate. They were rough-hewn and couched in materialistic language, but much of the apparent materialistic detail is due to two facts: firstly, that to the spirit these experiences seem as materialistic as men’s do to them; secondly, many of the finer distinctions made by the spirits have failed to penetrate the medium’s brain, whereas the more materialistic obtained a ready reception.’

“*I.* ‘Then there were mediums long ago through whom spirits in Hell could send messages’

“ ‘Certainly. And, further, at times men who were still alive have been able to visit these realms when their bodies were in a trance and carry back some recollection of what goes on here. Dante is perhaps the finest exponent of this kind of revelation.’

“ ‘Then Dante’s great work is not the mere figment of his poetic brain based on his own religious views.’

“ ‘No, it is a real revelation seen in the trance state, but molded into its present shape by the poetic imagination and slightly colored by the preconceived religious views of the medium. These changes took place when he set to work to put it into literary form. He had no misunderstanding of the facts immediately after he returned to the normal state.’

“He ceased, and we passed out of the room into another.

“Here we found the spirits just as they came in from Hell. Rescuers were constantly arriving, bringing some poor unfortunate being with them. These they handed over to others, who received them kindly, reasoned with them, and urged them to undergo ‘medical treatment.’

“It was not always easy to persuade them to do this, and even while I was there, several went out of the House of Refuge back to Hell. Perfect freedom is the law here, and if a man Wishes to be foul, foul he will be.

“I noticed that the magnetic healing seemed to be very largely employed in this stage, and the whole air seemed filled with particles of darkness given off by the lost spirits undergoing treatment. We passed through another door into a comparatively small anteroom in which various newcomers were waiting, attended by their rescuers, and at the further end was a great door.

“As I approached it I was aware of a living terror, awful, intangible; but real, and knew that it lay beyond that door. As we drew nearer and nearer to it the nameless terror seemed to grip my soul and numb it. I would have turned and fled, but my guide urged me to go forward.

“Now we stood in front of it, and suddenly it was flung open and a rescuer and his charge sprang in.

“The terror seemed to flow in with the darkness, and I cowered back against my guide. Quickly the door closed to; yet in that brief instant I saw quite plainly that the fugitives had been pursued up to the very door itself, and I heard the wild yell of baffled fury and hate as the pursuers found themselves kept back by the wall of Good Thoughts, which they could not penetrate.

“ ‘How was it,’ I asked my guide ‘that the pursuers were not able to prevent this man reaching safety?’

“ ‘Each rescuer carries around him a wall of faith and good thoughts, which these evil spirits cannot penetrate unless he himself makes a breach in it by giving way to any of the temptations with which they will attempt to lure him back. The poor lost soul, if he really desires to progress, can, with the permission of the rescuer, pass within this wall and so be safe. But if the rescuer refuses, he cannot, and if while protected with it he ceases to desire to progress, he will be at once driven out and so fall a victim to his pursuers.

“ ‘Often and often this does happen, and that is why those who take up this work must be gifted with the greatest patience. After one has striven so hard and risked so much, it is indeed hard to see the fruits of victory torn from our very grasp.’

"We turned, and very thankful was I to escape from the proximity of that nameless terror.

" 'Are there any hospitals similar to this in the realm of half-belief?' I inquired.

" 'Yes' my guide answered, 'but for a different kind of case. Many people who suffered from mind troubles on earth come to that realm. They fall into two divisions: those whose minds were unable to work, owing to some physical defect, and those whose minds themselves were affected.'

" 'The first group also may be subdivided into those whose physical defects, being present from birth, prevented all development, and those whose minds, having developed, were suddenly unhinged by some physical accident. These latter need but little treatment; but the other groups need treatment which, in some cases, measured by earth time, seems very long.

" 'You shall see these hospitals at another time'

"We then quickly passed out of the House of Refuge into the school and on into the courtyard, thence out of the gateway, and through the darkness out of Hell. Thus ended this strange lesson." (J. W.).

"It was a very extraordinary experience. Do you think that the smaller Houses of Refuge scattered through Hell have such elaborate arrangements?"

H. J. L. "No; they are just temporary receiving rooms where the rescued are 'patched up' till they can get to one of these great institutions.

"Now we must part."

He rose and made a sign over me, and I seemed to fall asleep. — J. W.

CHAPTER XXII

THE AUTHOR VISITS H. J. L. AT COLLEGE

TRANCE CONVERSATION, ETC. March 30th, 1914.

I found myself standing on an eminence, and beneath me I could see the towers and roofs of the college where I knew H. J. L. dwelt. H. J. L. was standing beside me, and began:

"Well, Jack, would you like to see over that college?"

"Yes," I replied. He began to descend the slope, and as we went I said: "Carrie asked me to ask you whether you could not give her any information concerning the 'lighter side of life' on this plane — your recreations and so forth — for I presume you are not always learning lessons."

H. J. L. “Well, this meeting shall be devoted to that subject. I will show you something, though, of course, only a glimpse of that side of life here.”

We had now reached the college, and paused in front of the gate. This gate was not in the centre, as I expected, but towards the south-east corner. I call it by this name, for I saw the east window of the chapel in the Decorated style over and behind the roof of the first line of buildings. This great gate, instead of a tower, had a gable roof with the end of the gable towards the quad and the side where we entered. The roof of the chapel was similarly high-pitched. The east window of the chapel was apparently in the Decorated style, and over the great gateway were three, long windows, the centre one having a little tracery and one mullion. The entrance to the hall, instead of being in the middle of the line of buildings, was at the north-west comer. For the rest, I need not go into much detail, as in the main it followed the lines of the usual college building.

Having passed through the gate, we crossed the quad at an angle and entered the hall.

CHAPTER XXIII

OF THEIR AMUSEMENTS AND HOW THE SPIRITS INSPIRE MEN ON EARTH

“This is a sort of club to which I belong,” H. J. L. explained. Here I found a large number of men congregated; some were playing chess, and I sat and watched several most brilliant games played by a man whom H. J. L. stated was Lasker.

“I doubt if I shall remember these games,” I said; “they are extraordinarily brilliant, but almost beyond me — even here — and I am sure they would be quite beyond my comprehension on earth.”

“Don’t worry about that,” he replied. “ You are not intended to remember the actual games, but only the fact that we do play.”

After a time we went out and passed through the great gate.

“I am going to show you another amusement I enjoy,” H. J. L. said.

He took me along a regular street into a square which was built in the style of the early Renaissance. Passing through a door, I found we were in — what I can only designate by the name of — an architect’s office. It, however, lacked the general air of untidiness usually prevalent in such places, and I noticed that models seemed to play a more important part in the production of

designs here than they do on earth. There were, however, a certain number of drawings to be seen.

“My partner is away learning a new spiritual truth, so I can’t introduce him to you; but he was a Frenchman who lived during the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth centuries. He studied, too, in Italy, so you see he knows a fair amount about Renaissance architecture. Still, he’s not quite up to date as to modern requirements, such as drainage arrangements, and that is where I come in. Of course he knows all about design and ornament, but I help with the more practical work.

“Here all the arts have reached a far higher stage of excellence than anything of which you are aware on earth.”

J. W. “But what good are these designs? Do you build houses here?”

H. J. L. “We can and sometimes do, but most often we endeavor to impress our ideas upon living men and get them to build them on the material plane. Let me tell you that all inspiration comes from this side. The works of genius are really the inspirations of the spirits acting through that man who is really mediumistic. This partly explains why so many men of genius are of an erratic temperament, and often of an unsatisfactory moral attitude. Being mediumistic they are liable to fall a victim to undesirable influences — evil spirits, in fact.”

J. W. “Do you mean, then, that no great inventions originate on the earth, or does this statement refer only to artistic inspiration?”

H. J. L. “Art, literature, music, even mechanical inventions, are almost always inspired from this side. Slight improvements and adjustment to enable the great idea to fit the conditions of earth life are the kind of advances which men make on earth. I hesitate to say that no great idea was ever invented on the earth, but I know of none, and am sure that they are very few and far between.

“This explains in part why it is that progress is so slow in the early centuries of life on this planet and of late has proceeded at such a rate.

“Men come over to us with some knowledge and a keen interest in various subjects, and in these more advanced surroundings they discover new laws, and in the light of this new knowledge inspire those who are following in their footsteps.

“All the same, men are often very stupid. We send out a brilliant idea, and the best parts are often misunderstood by, or fail to penetrate, the denser minds of those still on earth. Again and again we see our finest ideas reduced to a

miserable travesty of their real selves. As a man gets older, too, he often seems to grow more material, especially if he has become prosperous. This leads to poorer, or, at any rate, more commonplace work, for the finer ideas are no longer able to penetrate.

“Look at this idea for a church — splendid, isn’t it?

Renaissance style, but far finer than anything they’ve got on earth. But my partner had not realized how important heating and lighting are — I’m correcting that. Still, I don’t suppose even a feeble imitation of it will ever be built on earth. It’s such a materialistic age that we simply cannot get our ideas through, and even when we do get a man to produce a colorable imitation of some really fine inspiration, that man seldom gets the opportunity of carrying it out, the people who pay being of course far more materialistic — in art matters — than the artists. That is why the earlier periods, for example, the Middle Ages, were so much finer — they were less materialistic, and so responded more to our inspirations.”

J. W. “Then no man on earth deserves the credit of any great idea? The credit is due to the ‘mighty dead.’ “

H. J. L. “On the contrary, they deserve all the credit they can get, for it means that they have preserved and developed their higher and spiritual faculties, at any rate on the artistic or engineering side. This at any rate is something. Even a blackguardly, immoral man, who seems materialistic on most matters, must have developed his spiritual faculties to some extent if he is able to receive and carry out fine inspirations sent from this side.”

J. W. “But you spirits deserve the credit for the ideas themselves. Don’t you feel it a little unjust that you should get no credit for them?”

H. J. L. “Not the slightest. Jealousy, like other mortal sins, is left on the threshold of Hell. We work as an amusement simply for the love of our work. We seek neither fortune nor fame; the joy of producing good work is the only aim — that and the desire to help those still on earth.”

CHAPTER XXIV .

ART AND ARCHITECTURE ON THE SPIRIT PLANE

“I will now show you some further interests we have here. All the arts flourish here, and most of the sciences, but, of course, on a far more exalted plane. Let us take painting first.”

We stopped in front of a truly splendid building in the Renaissance style; but it would be impossible for me to describe it, it was so different from anything I have ever seen on earth.

H. J. L. “This was designed by my partner. He knew that it would be impossible to get such a brilliant idea carried out on earth, and so raised it here. It is ’built without hands.’ It is an ‘idea,’ and constructed out of his own ‘mind stuff.’ I’ll explain that a little more fully later.”

We entered, and I found that it corresponded to a picture gallery, only much better arranged than anything we have on earth.

J. W. “ If you have picture galleries, I presume you have museums?”

H. J. L. “We have them, but not so many as you would expect. You see, so far as is possible, we put ancient art objects to their original use in their original homes — Egyptian chairs in an Egyptian palace, and Egyptian jewels on their original owners or makers, for example.

“New objects of art, created over here, usually remain attached to their creator. But some spirits invent them for the purpose of being put on exhibition to delight others. For these there are museums. Similarly, ancient art objects are put in a few museums when on earth they have been destroyed, while the building to which they belonged still remains. This only affects objects entirely separate from the building itself: for example, if a fireplace and paneling were removed from their original building, even though the structure of the building and the paneling each continued to survive apart, the original form of the building would have been destroyed on earth and would come here.

“Now look at the pictures. These are ideas which were too exalted to be impressed upon any artist upon earth and are therefore here. The majority of the artists here, however, try to get their ideas impressed on earthly artists.”

I then began to look at the pictures. I perceived that not only were they far more beautiful than anything I had ever seen on earth, but they differed in many ways difficult to describe. The colors were both more brilliant and yet more harmonious — further, from them issued a kind of light. Then the

pictures seemed to be more in the round, figures and features seemed to stand put, distance appeared to be really there, and atmospheric conditions were more truly rendered. There were all kinds of subjects — landscapes, portraits, dramatic pieces, etc. — but the most interesting and best works were those dealing with what, for lack of a better word, I will call the highest emotions. Thus there was one entitled 'The Divine Love'. It depicted a marvelous spirit form, strong, yet gentle, just, yet merciful. It seemed to be watching over a multitude of human beings.

Now these human beings were divisible into two main divisions — those still in the flesh, and those who had left their bodies. The difference was clear and unmistakable. Further, every single figure differed in looks. No two were alike, just as no two persons on earth are just alike. But though these things were beautiful, the truly marvelous thing about the whole picture was the expression on the face of the great spirit, and an atmosphere of "Divine love" which it is impossible to describe.

After spending some time looking at these marvelous productions we left the gallery, and passing through a kind of park, entered another gallery.

H. J. L. "This is a sculpture gallery. Just as in architecture and painting, most artists try to get their ideas carried out on earth, but. some prefer to produce them here."

J. W. "Are those figures made of real marble, or whence do you obtain the stone?"

H. J. L. "We mould and make them out of our own 'mind stuff' which takes the form of marble or bronze, according as we conceive it. We may be said to build them up like a man does a clay model, but the clay is our own 'mind stuff.' I can give you no better word.

"Look at this group. The artist thought it would look best in silver, and so you see it is in that metal."

We wandered through these galleries filled with the most sublime conceptions, and which, like the pictures, defy description, and ultimately passed into a park which was likewise devoted to the display of sculpture.

Here were placed monumental works into which architecture often entered. Fountains and sculptured arches, besides groups of every description, were placed among the most, ideal surroundings of trees, lawns, and scenery. Water, I particularly noticed, played a large part in producing most beautiful effects.

CHAPTER XXV

MUSIC AND DRAMA

“Now I will take you to the schools of music,” said H.J.L.

In these I saw men composing and playing magnificent symphonies, and one room I entered resembled a concert-hall, on the stage of which a man was singing.

“If you have concert-halls, I suppose you have other places of entertainment?” I inquired.

H.J.L. “Certainly. We have theaters and so forth, only nothing pertaining to evil is acted here—that type of play goes to Hell. Our plays here include all that was best and noblest on earth, together with the production of works composed here. Only good work comes here; he feeble stuff, even when not actively evil, sinks down to the upper divisions of Hell.

“Of course we do not get the most superb spirit productions; these, being too advanced for us, are restricted to the divisions above us, in which, for the most part, they are produced.”

J.W. “But what of works like the plays of Shakespeare? These are fine and exalted in many ways, but there are parts which are distinctly coarse and even immoral.”

H.J.L. “That difficulty is met by recasting the offending parts. The author himself in this case, Shakespeare, has recast these parts. In place of the evil parts, passages of far finer poetry and sentiment have been substituted. Indeed, most are agreed that the new parts not only fit into the old most perfectly, but often give a meaning to parts that before were crude or hard to understand.”

J. W. “Then Shakespeare did write the plays? It was not Bacon.”

H. J. L. “Of course not; but Shakespeare wrote them under inspiration from a band of spirits, who have since passed on still higher. The very passages of an undesirable nature were those which Shakespeare himself put in to fill blanks where he had failed to grasp the higher inspirations sent him.

“You must understand, however, that it is the portrayal of evil in an attractive light which is impossible here, but when enacted to show its terrible consequences it becomes right, proper, and beneficial. Thus we constantly act *Othello,* and it is only a few coarse phrases which have been deleted. The plot, terrible as it is, yet is a good one, for it teaches a valuable lesson. We do not, however, go to the theater to learn such simple spiritual lessons as that (we

have learnt these before we reach this realm), but to see one of the finest plays ever given to the world enacted before our eyes. It also does good in that it reminds us of the temptations which beset our fellow-men on earth, and the terrors of Hell for those who fall. This latter prepares us for a sense of pity for those unfortunates who languish in Hell. These latter considerations, however, are subsidiary. They are, first and foremost, recreations."

J. W. "How do you act the women's parts, for I haw seen none here?"

H. J. L. "Oh, there are plenty of women here. Look!"

He led me into a room in which several women were practicing singing in chorus. Very beautifully they sang, but he hurried me away quickly, and we were soon in a kind of park, walking beside a river. He resumed the conversation.

"Yes, there are plenty of women here, but the sexes do not mix much in these realms. At first they are separated almost completely. It is desirable, as far as possible, to eliminate the old ideas of sex, ideas right and necessary on earth, but no longer needed here, otherwise spiritual progress would be rendered almost impossible by the old carnal feelings. Thus it is, of course, true that here there is *no marrying and giving in marriage*; but, on the other hand, as the last grains of earthly passion are eliminated, the male and female spirits begin to draw together again, for each is the complement of the other spiritually, just as they are on earth physically. The further we progress, the nearer together the two sexes draw, so that we understand ultimately there comes about a mystic union in spirit between one man and woman. This is the real spiritual union of which marriage on earth is a true symbol or sacrament. This consummation, this blending of two spirit entities, so that each becomes part of the other and yet retains its own individuality, cannot be fully understood even by us, much less by you. The earth marriage at its highest and best does give you some faint idea of what we really mean.

"This spiritual marriage, if so I can call it, takes place at a stage far above us — it may be in the fifth plane, or even higher. At least this is certain — it does not take place on our plane. Nevertheless, as we progress, we mingle more and more, first, with members of our own sex, and then with members of the other sex. It does not necessarily follow that we always marry spiritually the same woman as we did on earth, but we do marry someone who is our complement."

J. W. "Life here seems to be very much like life on earth."

H. J. L. "Like, yet different; very like earth life at its noblest and best. But here there is no sickness or sin, neither evil nor pain enter here. These are left

behind on the threshold of Hell. There is still some sorrow and repentance for sins now past, but sin, as on earth you understand the word, can come to us no more.

“Lack of knowledge there is, and therefore complete satisfaction and rest are — not to be found here, for one must progress. But deliberate opposition to the will of God is a thing of the past.

“Nothing that is ugly or evil; low or false, can survive here. Therefore, if any amusement is founded on evil, be it ever so intellectual, it is not found here. So, too, purely physical amusements cannot be indulged in, since we no longer have physical bodies.”

CHAPTER XXVI

INTRODUCTION TO W. A.

“Where are you taking me now?” I inquired.

H. J. L. “To see my private study and to introduce you to A., who wishes to send a message by you to M., and, after that, to the officer who wishes to go on with his description of what he went through in Hell.”

J. W. “But I have already been here a great while. Surely I ought to be getting back to my body, otherwise Carrie may wake up and find me unable to move.”

H. J. L. “It is perfectly all right. Though you appear to have been here a long time, you must realize that there is no real connection between time on earth and here. I don’t suppose you have been absent from your body for half an hour as you reckon time on earth. I will see that you are sent back in plenty of time.”

We passed beneath the great gate of the college, and, turning to the right, passed through an arch and up a flight of stairs. We entered a room, which I at once recognized as the one in which I had seen H. J. L. when Blanche also saw him. It was very similar to a room in a college. There was no fire, and a strange thought occurred to me.

“Do you have to clean out rooms and dust them here, and, if so, do you have servants to do that sort of work?”

H. J. L. “There is no dirt here, nor do we have any means of producing artificial warmth. The latter would be impossible to produce if we needed it, for heat and cold are of course spiritual, not physical, things here. It follows that there is no need for servants since there is neither dirt to clear away, nor

food to prepare; neither do we sleep. All the drudgery of work has vanished with our physical bodies.

“Now let me introduce you to Mr. A.”

I saw what appeared to be a very small boy, but on his shoulders was the head of a grown-up man. It was not that it was large, as on the cartoons one sees, but that it had a moustache and the expression of a man. His face was ruddy, nose rather fleshy at the end, hair ordinary brown. The face was inclined to be broad, and the body was distinctly stout, though not to an inordinate extent.

I had never met A., but we greeted each other with much cordiality, and he said:

“I asked Mr. L. to let me see you next time you came to visit us, as I wished to send a message to M.”

I replied, “I shall be delighted to do my best to give her any message you choose to send. But first tell me how you are getting on here.”

He answered, “Well, I’m making progress, but it’s very slow work. You see, I never developed my spiritual side. I devoted all my attention to my physical and material well-being. Then, too, my friendships with women did not do me any real good, as you can guess.”

He then proceeded to give me certain private messages. (These I have not published.) After giving them, he left us.

When he had gone, I said to H. J. L.:

“He looks just like a child, except for his face. I suppose that is because he did so little to develop his spiritual side.”

H. J. L. “Yes, as I have already explained to you, our spirit bodies grow like our earth bodies, and if we have not developed our spirit bodies on earth we have to do so after we arrive here.”

With some hesitation I inquired, “ Is it in my spirit body that I come here?”

“Yes.”

I continued, “Of what size is my body? Is it very small?”

H. J. L. “No, it is very fairly developed. In fact, it appears full grown, about the size of a man of twenty-one, but not matured beyond that age. That is what you ought to be, for the spirit body usually develops more slowly than the physical, and of course often it simply does not develop at all.

“Ah, here comes the officer.”

CHAPTER XXVII

HOW THE COLLEGE IS ORGANISED, AND OF OTHER LIKE INSTITUTIONS

TRANCE VISION ON NIGHT OF APRIL 27th, 1914

I found myself in H. J. L.'s study.

He began, "I think I'll tell you a little more about myself. "

"Yes, I hope you will; it's quite a long time since you did," I replied.

"Well, it was necessary to get on with the narratives of the others, and, further, I wanted to collect and sift further experiences. It would be no use giving you almost the same experiences over and over again.

"I propose now to tell you something about this college.

"There are all manner of institutions here, and societies of almost every description. Some are devoted to develop one's spiritual nature, others to helping those less fortunate than ourselves. Some, again, are composed of kindred spirits bent on making new discoveries in the same subjects as interested them when on earth, while a fourth group devote their attention to inspiring men with new facts they have discovered or developed here.

"Indeed, I could devote the whole of this meeting to merely mentioning the various types of societies that exist here, but instead I will give you a few details of the four types just mentioned and a fuller description of an actual society, this college, which belongs to one of these types.

"Omitting No. 1 for the moment, as the college and the secondary schools belong to it, I will take Nos. 2, 3, and 4.

"No. 2 includes various societies devoted to rescuing souls in Hell, and also others which endeavor to help men still on earth to keep on the right path.

"The bands of spirits who organize the Houses of Refuge in Hell are a good example of this type.

"No. 3 includes many societies bent on working out scientific laws and principles of art, architecture, medicine, music, and so forth.

"I belong to a society of Renaissance architects who are bent on evolving new ideas without departing too far from the underlying principles of the Renaissance architecture.

"No.4 is the corollary of No.3, as No. 2 is of No. 1; but many of the spirits who are in No. 3 do not care about inspiring mortals with their discoveries. Sometimes this is because they are simply no longer interested in the earth, but often it is because they have discovered by painful experience that either

their ideas become but the merest travesty of the original when impressed upon the minds of men, or, far worse, they are taken and devoted to evil instead of to useful purposes. Thus good ideas of art are extremely liable to suffer the former fate, while scientific or engineering ideas, being in some measure more mundane, are often properly grasped, but at the same time turned to evil uses by the perverse nature of men.

“Thus it is that a large body of spirits refuse absolutely to pass on their discoveries to men. The result is that many societies belonging to group three impose the rule that no discovery made by any member of the society while a member may be communicated either to a mortal or to any spirit who is a member of any society in group four.

“Not all societies, however, impose this rule, but leave it to the choice of the member whether or not he shall belong to a society in group four. All, however, abstain, as societies, from inspiring men. This work is left in the hands of group four.

“I may as well add that medical societies are particularly numerous in group four.”

J. W. “Do you always belong to a society if you wish to inspire? Can’t individuals do this work quite as well by themselves?”

H. J. L. “It could be done, but not as well. In practice we find that it is better to have a society, though often quite a small one.

“Now about this college. It is under the control of a ‘Master’ who has a second in command. Then, to assist them, there is a committee with a chairman.”

J. W. “Like a Freemasons’ lodge — a master, senior and junior warden.”

H. J. L. I don’t know much about Freemasons, but that’s rather the idea. The members of this college consist of three divisions, and we are promoted from the first to the second, and from the second to the third, according as we learn the great spiritual truths.

“From the third or highest division the committee are elected. The various officers are chosen by the head of the college from this committee.”

J. W. “It’s really rather like a Freemasons’ lodge with its three degrees, and so on.”

H. J. L. “Very likely. Probably the idea was inspired from this side. Still, it’s a very natural arrangement, and somewhat similar to college on earth with its first-, second-, and third-year men and its fellows.”

J. W. “Have you anything corresponding to an examination?”

H. J. L. "Not really. What happens is that our teachers, when they consider we have learnt all that is to be learnt in that degree, if so you like to call it, send us on to the next set of teachers.

"On entering this new *degree* we are received with a certain amount of ceremony. These divisions, you quite understand, have nothing to do with the divisions of this plane. We are still in the division of half-belief even when in the third degree in our college. That's why I rather jumped at the word *degree* to avoid confusion."

J. W. "Which degree are you in?"

H. J. L. "Still in the lowest, but I hope soon to be promoted to the next. Now it is time you returned."

J. W. "Why, I have only been here quite a short time!"

H. J. L. "Nevertheless, you've been here long enough."

I seemed to be caught up by a whirlwind and to be swept out into space. Everything became black. I appeared to be whirling round in great circles which steadily grew less and less. Then I lost consciousness. — J. W.

CHAPTER XXVIII

A HOSPITAL ON THE SPIRIT PLANE

TRANCE VISION, ETC., MAY 4th, 1914

I found myself in H. J. L.'s room.

He began, "I went to see one of our mental hospitals recently."

J. W. "Hospitals! I thought you said there was no pain here. You said it was left on the threshold of Hell."

H. J. L. "Nor is there any pain. Still, some spirits come here whose minds have for long been clouded, and these need treatment.

"Mental cases may be roughly divided on earth as follows: —

" I. Idiots.

"II. Lunatics.

The latter fall into at least three divisions: —

"1. Lunacy caused by physical defects,

(a) early,

(b) late in life.

“2. Lunacy caused by evil life, or at least evil passions.

“3. Lunacy caused by religious mania and such kindred mental disturbances and lack of balance, *e.g.* excessive sorrow.

“With regard to idiots (No. I). The cause is some kind of physical defect, and its result is that the individual to a greater or less extent comes here ignorant and in need of teaching. The less knowledge they possess, the lower they will start. If they have no knowledge even of God and a future life, they will go to the topmost division of Hell. You remember, however, there is no real suffering there. There they will be taught in special schools, not with either the babes or the evil souls who are progressing.

“Some idiots, however, have been able to acquire some knowledge of God and a future life, and may come to us. Contrariwise, they may have sufficient intelligence to be responsible for turning their back on faith, but these are rare.

“The whole of this group, however, owe their mental difficulty to some physical, not spiritual defect, and therefore, once clear of the physical, need teaching, but not medical treatment in any form.

“Group II, the lunatic, includes (a) and (b). In the case of the former, it all depends what stage of spiritual development they had attained before the physical defect occurred which rendered them insane. In the case of those thus afflicted in early life, it is probable that they will have to go to the ‘elementary’ schools in the seventh division of Hell, though, of course, they may know enough to enter our realm and go to the secondary schools. In all probability, however, they will not have had time to commit many sins for which they will have to undergo penance.

“Those afflicted later will have had time alike to acquire knowledge and therefore faith, and some time to do evil for which they will have to suffer. Their spiritual development, in short, will be that which they had reached when the insanity came upon them.

“Of course many so-called lunatics, even when lunacy is due solely to a physical defect or injuries, are not completely lacking in responsibility for their deeds. Often only part of the brain is affected, and in that case they may appear normal except on one or two points. These shades of insanity are settled automatically. The spirit feels no need of remorse for offences it had no intention of committing, and for which it cannot be responsible. It, of course, regrets any evil that may have been caused by its being unable to control its body, just as a motorist would grieve if his motor ran away and

hurt someone, but that would not be the sense of moral guilt which would attach to him if the accident was due to his racing.

“Of course there is no possibility of pretence here.

“This type of lunatic takes up his education at the point at which the accident occurred which deprived him of his reason. He will suffer for his misdeeds also up to that point, and after, so far as he was responsible.

“Mental treatment will not be necessary generally in these cases, merely education.

“Before passing to the next group, let me remind you that many so-called maniacs are really unfortunate beings who are obsessed by other spirits. For the crimes committed by these through the maniac’s physical organism the unfortunate man is, of course, not responsible directly. He may, however, have to suffer here for them indirectly, in so far as it was his evil life that allowed an evil spirit to take control.

“When the responsibility goes so far as invoking evil spirits to aid him in his nefarious purposes, as did the ancient wizards, the moral guilt is tremendous.

This is indeed one of the worst crimes possible, for which mental derangement is but the commencement of retribution. — This type of obsession naturally leads us to consider the cases 2 and 3.

“2. Lunacy caused by evil life or at least passion.

This group very largely goes to Hell, but of course not all. It is these latter who chiefly need treatment in our hospitals as well as ordinary education. Spiritual pride and even commonplace conceit are potent factors for rendering people insane as well as the more obvious vices, such as drink and lust.

“These sufferers must not be confused with the cases of obsession just mentioned.

“No. 3 are often very difficult cases with which to deal. Of course the simpler forms soon right themselves. Thus sorrow soon loses its sting here, and any physical defects caused by it are left behind with the body. Very little treatment would be necessary in such a case. On the other hand, religious mania is often very difficult to eliminate. It is none the easier because such persons are often strong believers, and would ordinarily go to that realm. They have, however, to come to the hospital in our realm and there remain till cured. It would be useless for them to go to the realm of belief without acts, for they would be utterly incapable of seeing any good in any other religion

until the religious mania and its attendant evils have been eradicated. Then, of course, they go to their natural realm of existence.

“Without spending any more of your time discussing these matters, I will now proceed to describe one of these hospitals.

“I was taken thither by a man who during life had been a great mental specialist.

“The building was placed amid the most beautiful surroundings, which seemed to breathe an atmosphere of peace and rest.

“I mentioned this impression to my friend the doctor, who replied:

“ ‘Quite so; quiet, soothing surroundings are the first essentials for dealing with any kind of mental disorder.’

“The gardens surrounding the hospital contained broad stretches of lawn interspersed with beautiful woods, and everywhere the soft notes of rippling or falling water were faintly audible. Ever and anon through the trees I caught the glint of water tinged with the evening glow which is ever present here.

Amid these woods, walking about the lawns and boating on the lakes, I saw many of the patients.

“Passing along a handsome avenue, we at length came in sight of the hospital. It was a splendid building in the Renaissance style, with verandahs along the front, and was surrounded upon all sides by velvety lawns and flower-beds. Numerous basins with fountains playing and statues of various kinds decorated the lawns.

“A woman, seated on a low stool, was playing a harp, while reclining on couches round her were many patients of both sexes.

“We passed into the building itself, and I found that in some ways the institution was arranged on similar lines to those of the Houses of Refuge in Hell. Thus there was a secondary school attached, and most of the patients attended the school as part of their course of treatment. Further, there were concert-halls and a theater, chapels for several different religious bodies, an art gallery, and so forth.

“My medical friend explained. ‘One of our chief objects is to divert the mind of the patients from too much concentration upon themselves. Many were very selfish or at any rate self-centered folk. Religious mania or excessive grief is likewise the cause of many of these cases being here. Wholesome, soothing amusements, which will dispel the morbid trait in their characters, are therefore of the greatest value.’

“ ‘As to direct treatment, we very largely employ suggestion, hypnotism, and magnetism. See!’

“We entered what on earth would have been called an operating theater. Here, two doctors were busy magnetizing a woman patient. She was stretched on a bed, clad in a plain grayish-white robe drawn in at the waist by a girdle, and similar to the costume they all wear here. One doctor was standing behind her with his hand gently resting on her forehead, while the other stood at her feet, but without touching her. Both men seemed to be concentrating their wills on her and gazing into her face. They made no movement or any sign that they were aware of our presence.

“I was able to perceive that from each there appeared to flow out a kind of faint light, and that this light was being focused, as it were, on her head.

“We passed into another room where a violin was being played to soothe the man who was tossing in mental distress upon the bed.

“I said to the doctor, ‘I notice that here the sexes mix much more than they do round where I dwell.’

“ ‘Not really so. There is very little companionship here between the men and the women. Both, however, are necessary to aid in the work; especially is it found that better results from magnetism are obtained when the operator is of the opposite sex to the patient.’

“We entered a third room and found a hypnotist at work. He was making passes over someone.

“As soon as he saw us he bowed and explained that this patient could not eliminate from his mind the remembrances of a terrible accident for which he was to a certain extent responsible. The remembrance of this had turned his brain on earth, and the ill effects were not yet entirely removed from his mind.

“ ‘I am hypnotizing him for a time, so as to compel him to forget this terrible experience, and so by degrees we shall restore peace to his troubled mind.’

“Leaving him, we passed into a comparatively small room in which was a patient lying on a couch. My medical friend said: ‘This is a strange case, and shows how strong is the power of the mind and even the remembrance of the body after death.

“ ‘This woman’s mental affliction in life took the form of a belief that she was a cripple unable to walk. There was nothing organically wrong, yet by degrees, as this hallucination grew upon her, she became crippled and misshapen even as she is now. Had the disease been a physical one she would have left it

behind her at death, but it is purely a mental one, due to a morbid nature which in life seemed to take a perverted joy in gazing at the misshapen and crippled. This she did not from any motive of sorrow or wish to help the sufferers, but out of a morbid curiosity. For the rest, however, she was neither a total unbeliever nor yet evil by nature, few cases such as this come to us here: they are, I understand, more common in Hell.'

"I (H. J. L.) inquired, 'How do you treat her?'

"*He.* 'Mainly by magnetism and mental suggestion. We are striving to prove to her that her spiritual body need not reproduce the defects of the physical one. Most spirits readily grasp that fact, but her mind has become so overclouded that she cannot as yet grasp it. However, even the most obstinate cases soon yield to treatment here. What does seem to take a long time is the education which is afterwards necessary.'

"We passed through other rooms, through long wards and into lecture-rooms where doctors were giving lectures on medical subjects.

"I (H. J. L.) inquired of my friend whether there was not an operating theater as in an earthly hospital.

" 'Oh dear, no!' he replied. 'We have got long past those clumsy methods here. Of course, some operations are required on earth owing to the material nature of a physical body, although there are far more operations than are really necessary.

Here, however, the spirit body yields to and needs much subtler methods. The only place you find anything approaching an operating theater is in Hell.'

"I shuddered at the horror of the idea underlying those simple words.

"It would take me too long to give you any further details of this wonderful hospital, 'but perhaps I should say that I was surprised to find how large a part religious services played in the treatment.

"We don't attend religious services to any large extent in this realm — that is our principal duty in the next realm, — but services formed quite a marked feature of the treatment, I perceived, and in this it approximated to the House of Refuge in Hell and to the ordinary course of life in the realm of belief without acts.

"Many of the services, I noticed, had quite an elaborate ritual, and evidently were designed expressly with the object of helping forward the mental healing of the patients who attended. A shadowy prototype on earth was that funny old service of touching and healing in the Prayer Book in the days of Queen Anne.

"Outside in the grounds we separated, and after thanking my medical friend, I returned here."

CHAPTER XXIX

"NEITHER WILL THEY BE PERSUADED THOUGH ONE ROSE FROM THE DEAD"

J. W. "May we publish the names and details for identification given by P. *re* himself and Barber."

H. J. L. " With regard to P. and Barber, I think there is no harm in giving the details about the latter; it was meant as a piece of conclusive evidence, and I think most would agree it is. With regard to P., matters are a little different. He feels it rather a hindrance already to keep sufficiently in touch with earth matters to send you his experiences, and does not want to do anything which might draw him back still further into earth conditions.

"If the details he has given were published, being a well-known man, you would have a number of carping, or at any rate inquisitive, persons constantly sending tests and expecting them to be answered. If P. agreed to answer those tests, he would at once be assailed by further ones. He would be constantly worried by them, and, therefore, dragged back into earth conditions. He wishes to be rid of earth trammels, and, instead, would find he had rebound himself with them. If he refused to answer further tests, people would at once say it was fraud. They would say, 'Here are communications coining through which purport to be from Mr. P., and yet the entity either will not or cannot answer these simple questions as to his earth life'

"They would refuse to see that it is quite one thing to send a message through dealing with life here and another to put ourselves again in touch with our former earth life.

"You yourself believe us and do not bother us with unnecessary questions. You have not only had dates and other details of the lives of men quite unknown to you, but have also from W. A. received details of his private life not merely unknown to you, but in a large measure unintelligible even when given. These details have, however, been perfectly plain to M., and have convinced her of his identity, as she herself told you. It is, therefore, not with any wish to avoid giving evidence when the demand is reasonable that I hesitate to request P. to allow the details about him to be published. Talk the matter over with Mr. K. and then consult me again. With regard to Barber, the same objections do not arise. He is not communicating through you, nor do

we propose to let him. Neither is he interested in doing so, being otherwise engaged.

“If, therefore, anyone wanted to cross-question them, he would fail to get any reply; but this could hardly be taken as disproving the reality of our group of spirits.

“Is the matter now quite plain?”

J. W. “Yes. Still, I am sorry. If P. would agree it would once and for all decide the question which still vexes people — whether the identity does survive after death or not. I mean agree to be thoroughly ‘cross-questioned,’ as you call it.”

H. J. L. “Not a bit of it. Plenty of evidence has been sent through to prove that to any reasonable man. Even what we have given should be sufficient, and there have been still more striking examples where spirits have deliberately thrown back their own progress so as to prove even to the most obstinate unbeliever that there is a personal survival after death. But it is selfish and unreasonable to expect us continually to be doing that sort of thing, I mean delaying our own progress.

“No, Jack, many people do believe, but it is still true of many men, ‘Neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.’

“Now it’s time you were off.”

Next instant I sank into oblivion. — J. W.

CHAPTER XXX

THE AUTHOR’S ADVENTURE IN THE PARK ON THE SPIRIT PLANE

TRANCE VISION, ETC. May 18th, 1914.

I again saw myself lying asleep on the bed, but this time did not feel nervous. The room seemed to get more and more distant and then grew nebulous. I seemed to be enveloped in a mist, and gradually this mist took shape and form, became solid, and lo! the landscape with which I was now familiar.

Before me was stretched a beautiful tract of country bathed in a soft evening light. I floated down on to a grassy hill and saw below me in the valley the town in which H. J. L. now lived. Soon I was able to pick out the roofs of the college and turned my steps in that direction.

The route I took led me through a beautiful wood, amid the branches of whose trees birds were singing merrily.. As I drew nearer the town I saw the

park with statuary and the sculpture gallery which I had seen before. I began to walk through the park, and I noticed how sweetly the flowers smelt.

Large numbers of spirits were constantly passing me, and several gazed at me intently, as if they felt I was in some way different.

At length two young men stopped and said, “Who are you, and are you dead? You do not look quite like one of us, and yet if you are not dead how come you here?”

I replied, “No, I’m not dead, but somehow I have developed in such a way recently since my father-in-law died that I am able to come and visit him here and even carry away a remembrance of what I see.”

“Well, that’s very funny. I wish I’d been able to do that,” said one of them, “when I was alive.”

“Can you visit any other planes of existence besides these?” the other inquired.

“No,” I replied, “but I meet others who have been selected by my father-in-law, and these give me accounts of their experiences in Hell and in the plane above this, and also in the astral plane.”

“You’re jolly lucky,” the taller of the two (who had spoken first) cried. “We know practically nothing of either Hell or the plane above, though, of course, we do know something of the astral plane. You might tell us something about them. Come, let us sit down by this fountain.”

I sat down with them and had just begun to relate some of the officer’s adventures, when I saw H. J. L. hurrying towards me. He was evidently annoyed, and said, “Really, Jack, you ought to have known better than to sit down here chattering when the officer and I are waiting to get to business.”

The two strangers at once apologized and explained that it was their fault.

H. J. L. answered, “That’s all very well, and I know you meant no harm, but if you want that sort of information, come to me for it and you shall have it. My nephew’s work is to give it to those who are alive on the earth, not to preach to those who, having died, have come here.”

We then parted, and I went with H. J. L. through the streets, which seemed fairly full of people, into the college.

In his room I found the officer waiting, who, having shaken hands, remarked, “If you’re not careful, you’ll get so fond of this country that you’ll not wish to return to your own.” He then took up the story of his life on this side of the grave.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE FATE OF CHILDREN

TRANCE VISION AND CONVERSATION May 25th, 1914.

As in my last vision, I saw the whole landscape on my way to H. J. L., but this time spoke to no one till I was in H. J. L.'s room.

As soon as I saw him, I asked, "What is the age limit at which children can enter Hell? I notice that from the account of the officer there are no children in Hell proper, and yet they are to be found in the seventh division of Hell."

H. J. L. answered, "You cannot, of course, fix any exact age limit. Things work much more reasonably than that. Thus if an infant dies who as yet knows nothing of God, it goes to the infant schools in Hell, as you know. If it has acquired a vague idea of God and a future life, it will come to our secondary schools in the realm of half-belief.

"If it has acquired sufficient knowledge it may go to the college, and, finally, boys and girls who have a real living belief may go direct to the realm above this, or occasionally to the highest plane of all. In these cases they will have to complete their education on the intellectual side, although their spiritual side may be well developed. This is, of course, a reversal of what generally happens here. Usually our intellects have been developed largely at the expense of our spiritual functions.

"Now let us consider the other side.

"When a child reaches a certain stage in its development, roughly from five to seven, it would ordinarily begin to have some general idea as to right and wrong. Now if a child has been badly brought up, or if it inherits a perverse and evil nature from its ancestors, or if obsessed, it may develop very unpleasant characteristics. It may commit serious offences, and in general may begin to develop badly.

"Under these circumstances it is cut off very often at the wish of its guide and transferred to the astral plane. There, clear of many of the surroundings which might have dragged it down; it will have an opportunity of developing and of learning sufficient to enable it on leaving the astral plane to come at least to the realm of half-belief.

"This period of child life stretches roughly from five to twelve, but, of course, may vary at either end.

“The third stage is when they are ceasing to be children and becoming adults, especially in the matter of sex. This is a very critical age, and many children unfortunately choose the downward instead of the upward path.

“The tendency is still, however, for the final decision to be left for the astral plane; and I must remind you that to a certain extent this is always the case. In the case; however, of an adult hardened in sin, the astral simply continues in its new life, repeating the sins of the former; but a youth who has started on the downward path, being less hardened, is more likely to be checked by the shock of death.

Further, he is hardly likely to have had time to drive away his guardian angel in the way that a hardened sinner has. Thus even a thoroughly vicious youth will probably see the folly of his ways as soon as he reaches the astral plane, and the vicious habits, not yet being firmly rooted, will be easier to eradicate.

“On the other hand, if he rejects this second chance and falls into the type of sins represented by ‘obsessing,’ he will sooner or later be hurled out of his astral body into Hell. But when that day comes he or she will no longer be a child, probably not in years, certainly not in spiritual development.

“Thus you see how it comes about that there are no children in Hell.”

J. W. “But there are vicious children of five or six.”

H. J. L. “Not many. They may be spoilt, thoughtless, and selfish, but there are few who are really vicious. Further, they too will realize the wickedness of their faults on coming over and seeing them visualize, as we all do.

“If not sufficiently spiritual to pass straight on to us, they will remain on the astral plane and there learn wisdom. If, however, they do not learn wisdom, they will learn folly, but even that will take time to work out its full course, and only when they have become too gross and wicked for the astral plane will they drop to Hell. They will have ceased to be children when that happens.

“But it is seldom that a young child does grow worse on the astral plane. They nearly all improve, and, moreover, the bulk of young children are too spiritual to remain even there, but come almost at once either to the elementary schools in the top division of Hell or else to us.

“But here’s the officer.”

CHAPTER XXXII

OF ANIMALS, AND HOW THEY CONVERSE WITH MEN

TRANCE VISION AND CONVERSATION June 1st, 1914.

I found myself floating over my body, and then began to whirl away into space. I seemed to pass through the ceiling into the open air, but yet was able to look right into my bedroom.

Then the room became misty and vanished. I seemed to be whirling on and on amid clouds and mists, and it seemed a long journey, but at length the mists began to take form. At first these were fantastic in shape, some like castles and cliffs, others like dragons and monsters, then fairy cities, minarets, and cupolas. At length these vanished, and, as the mists rolled away, I saw a vast landscape stretching away beneath me. First I saw high mountains and arid deserts, and, beyond these, a great wall of darkness. I appeared to be traveling away from this wall of darkness, and gradually the landscape became less forbidding. The rocky mountains became clothed with forests, the deserts covered with grass. By degrees it developed into the beautiful country I now knew so well, bathed in that curious evening glow.

Concentrating my mind on Old Queen's College, I seemed to increase the speed of my flight. Almost for a moment I found myself actually in H. J. L.'s room.

"Oh, Boss," I said, "what do animals, such as fowl (which spend their whole life on earth hunting for food), do on this plane? They can have no occupation!'

He replied, "While they are on the astral plane most animals still endeavor to get food. They go on grubbing about for it, and it is only by degrees that they learn that any food they appear to find is but a delusion, and that, in fact, they do not need it. Once that stage is reached, the animal generally passes on to this plane. Many animals, such as most of the carnivora, seem quite unable to learn this lesson, and remain on the astral plane still hunting astral deer, which they never catch."

J. W. "Are there men who go on hunting animals which they never catch?"

H. J. L. " Yes; there are even fox-hunters, horses and all, but sooner or later they weary of the empty sham, for they never catch anything. Usually, however, the tables are reversed, and the hunter upon earth becomes the hunted there.

"Man is back in the primitive world without the aid of weapons, and again is liable to the life of fear which our early ancestors suffered. Not till he has learnt the great secret, the power of the human will, is he again free from that fear. But you must remember that the type of man who runs foul of the astral animals is the man who has hunted them on earth. All men don't have exactly the same experiences on the astral plane, any more than they do on this plane.

"When the animals reach this plane, they have done so because they have other interests besides eating. At times they still cast back and feebly hunt round. I know occasionally Molly misses a bone, just as I do my pipe."

J. W. "Why, there is Molly," and as I spoke Molly emerged from under a sofa and came up to me wagging her tail in quite a friendly way.

H. J. L. *continued.* "Animals here become far more closely attached to us than they ever do on earth. They certainly understand us better, and this compensates for the loss of more material amusements.

"You see, as we can perceive each other's thoughts, so we can, though to a lesser extent, perceive the animal's thoughts. They, too, visualize, but the difference lies in this: the average animal not having learnt to think clearly, as we have, can only visualize a muddled sort of idea. But they tend to improve.

"Of course their ideas, at the best, are very simple. Still, it creates a bond of sympathy which is largely absent on earth. Now just look at Molly's thought."

I (J. W.) looked intently, but could perceive nothing at first.

"I can't see anything; perhaps she is not thinking of anything in particular."

H. J. L. "On the contrary, she is thinking very deeply for a dog. That's why I thought you'd be able to see it, though, of course, you have not had any practice in developing that faculty. However, try again. Empty your mind of all personal thoughts and concentrate it on Molly. Fix your eyes on the tip of her nose."

I laughed at the last sentence, but followed all his instructions. After a moment the whole room seemed to fade away, including even the dog herself, and in its place was a kind of light which grew into a picture similar to the clairvoyant pictures one sees in the crystal. And then I saw Carrie sitting in the boat at Weybridge, and Molly herself seated in the prow. The boat moved out of the boat-house into the river, and Carrie, who was wearing a white jersey, was rowing. There was no one else in the boat. Then the vision changed, and I saw Molly and Carrie seated in the garden at Weybridge. Tea was brought out, and Molly proceeded to lie down for a piece of cake.

Then H. J. L.'s voice broke in: "Well, Jack, you could see her thoughts that time?"

J. W. "Yes; but how did you know I could?"

H. J. L. "Because I could see both your thoughts and hers, and they corresponded. We get fairly expert in reading people's thoughts here, but of course you are new to it.

"Well, I think that answers your question fairly well. You can easily understand that the more closely associated with man an animal is, the more it will develop. The more it develops the more complicated will be the ideas which it will be able to remember or understand, and so communication between men and animals will become easier. For example, that thought of Molly's was fairly complicated. Many animals would have managed nothing more than a face of their mistress.

"If we wish to communicate an idea to an animal, we have to think of some very simple idea.

"Now watch. I'm going to think of Blanche."

At once Molly jumped up and wagged her tail, and I perceived she was looking at the Boss. Between both of them appeared a vision of Blanche about two years old, but whereas H. J. L. saw her in the garden at L —, Molly only saw B. with no particular background. I knew this because Blanche stood out very clearly, while the garden at L — was much fainter, and I knew, by instinct, that this was because Molly had grasped the idea of Blanche, but not the more complicated idea of "at L —."

Then it vanished, and H. J. L. said, "Yes, she got the first idea all right, but not did grasp that I meant at L — . I daresay if you were to think of her at G — she'd grasp that all right. The remembrance of G — in connection with Blanche would be so much clearer to her."

I tried, and at once Molly got very excited, jumped up on her hind legs, and began to walk towards me. At the same time I saw the vision of Blanche on the tennis-lawn at G —, and the background was nearly, though not quite, as clear as Blanche. In short, Molly had perceived practically the whole idea I had desired to convey. Then it faded again, and Molly retired once more under the sofa.

H. J. L. "How high the most intelligent animals can travel with us I can't say, but you will see that there are possibilities of development for them here lacking on earth.

“Of course by telepathy even on earth, animals are often able to read our thoughts to a limited extent, but it is generally in the matter of the cruder passions, such as fear of them or dislike. Further, they are often helped even in these cases by involuntary movements of our own.

“I think, however, that we’ve said enough on this subject for tonight. If you think over carefully what I have just told you, you will realize its importance more fully. If, then, any point requires further elucidation — why, ask me again.”

J. W. “Thanks. By-the-bye, how are we communicating now? We appear to be talking.”

H. J. L. “By telepathy. Our minds, used to the idea of talking, translate it into words, but of course we do not actually use words here. You would perceive the force of this at once if you were communicating with a Frenchman. To him you would appear to be talking in French; to you he would seem to be speaking in English.

“It is only when we get on to the earth plane and try to communicate through a medium that we have to employ actual language. Then, if we wished to speak to foreigners and did not know the language, we should have to learn it. This can be done, but I do not propose to go into exactly how just at the present moment.

“When we perceive each other’s thoughts, our minds turn this perception into sight. Both are related to telepathy, but, for the sake of distinction, we can correlate perception of visions with clairvoyance. We can employ either method for communicating. With men, telepathy is slightly the easier; it seems to require less will exertion.

“With animals, however, I find the vision is the best method, probably because they have never spoken on earth. But of course both methods merge. Even in your own case, when the officer has been telling you his adventures, you have at times not merely heard, but seen what he went through.”

J. W. “Yes, that is so, though, when writing these ‘visits’ down, I had not realized it.”

“Well, you will realize it now. Here comes the officer.”

The officer, having finished his narrative, went out.

H. J. L. then spoke: “Well, good-bye, Jack, for the time being.”

I then willed that I should return, and as I did so I seemed to rise in the air and pass out through the window. Again I saw beneath me the spirit landscape, with its beautiful meadows and wooded hills and dales.

Clouds came drifting by and gradually covered it as by a mist. I could still perceive it for a time through the mist, which, however, grew thicker and thicker, till it appeared almost like layers of cotton-wool.

This solid mist gradually became even more solid and began to assume shapes. At first these were vague, indistinct, and colorless, but before long they took the form of moorlands broken into hills and valley.

This landscape was far more barren than that which I had seen on the spirit plane; still, it was not without a certain grandeur and beauty. Then by degrees color came into the landscape, though slowly. I seemed to be rushing above this country at a great pace, while at the same time drawing nearer to the earth. Speed! Speed!

I noticed that the light was becoming stronger, and gradually I realized I was passing down the Rivelin valley from the direction of the moors.

Faster and faster I whirled, and Glen House appeared to spring up and rush to meet me. I seemed to pass clean through the walls of the room and pirouetted round the bed.

Then I seemed to strike something with great force and lost consciousness. — J. W.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE ASTRAL AND SPIRIT PLANES COMPARED

TRANCE VISIT Monday night, June 15th.

As before, I felt myself traveling through space and saw the earth landscape change for that of the spirit realms.

On entering H. J. L.'s room I asked him, "What do you consider is the exact difference between a man on the astral plane and one on the spiritual?"

H. J. L. "I understand what you mean. On the astral plane we are still to a certain extent material. We have, as it were, an etherealized material body. The astral plane consists of particles of, very fine matter, much more etherealized, of course, than the gross atoms of the earth, but still matter. They stand somewhat in the same relations to the ordinary physical world that gases do to solids on earth.

“This material body, being so ethereal, is of course much more completely dominated by the spirit for good or evil.

“It is the same thing with the astral landscape. In the spirit plane, however, matter has, for all intents and purposes, been left behind. It is with our ‘forms’ that we clothe our souls, and the landscape and the buildings which you see now before you are the ‘forms’ of those things when on earth.

“Thus it is when we wish to become visible even to the clairvoyant upon earth we usually have to clothe ourselves with a temporary astral form, just as, to make ourselves visible to ordinary folk, we have to materialize a temporary physical body. Mind you, there are clairvoyants who can see into the sixth plane — you are one — but most clairvoyants cannot. Even when a clairvoyant can, better results are often obtained by our clothing ourselves with an astral form.”

J. W. “In dreams do we come to the astral or to the spiritual plane, or sometimes to one and sometimes to the other?”

H. J. L. “Dreams are of many orders. Some are purely the invention of the human brain. They may be little more than the thoughts of the day worked over and redigested by the brain at night, or they may be pure fiction, similar to the stories children tell themselves for amusement.

“The very materialistic have dreams of these two orders, and most people at times have some of these, but many persons enter the astral plane in what they think are dreams, and a few, but very few, enter the spirit plane.

“You do so, but the reason is that you are mediumistic, and, still more important, because I call you. Very few have such a privilege, and even those who do seldom bring away so clear a recollection. We help you to remember, but it is true that experiences on the spirit plane, appertaining to the spirit as they do, seem to remain attached to the spirit and are more vivid than those of the astral plane, which, being more akin to earth life, become distorted as the astral reunites with the physical. It is as if the physical brain attempted to explain astral phenomena by physical laws and largely failed, but recognized the hopelessness of trying to do so with the spiritual.

“Far more people get on to the astral plans in their sleep. They come wandering along the fringe of it, as it were, often apparently half dazed, as if their connection with their bodies rendered them only partly conscious of the astral world in which they moved.

“The astral body, of course, is often unable to leave the physical body owing to the gross and material life such people live, and even when it can get out of the physical it cannot or dare not go any distance from it.

“But perhaps you would like to see some of these visitors to the edge of the astral plane?”

J. W. “I should; but what of the officer?”

H. J. L. “Oh, I’ll tell him not to come.”

He appeared to concentrate his thoughts for a moment, and as I watched him I saw the face of the officer visualize before him and then fade away again.

H. J. L. “Now we will go to the plane where the worlds meet. First I shall have to clothe myself with an astral body, however.”

J. W. “And what of me? Shall I not need an astral body too?”

H. J. L. “Yes. Where did you leave yours?”

J. W. “I don’t know. Do you think it will be with my physical?”

H. J. L. “We had better ask our guardian spirits.”

As he spoke, a light appeared behind him, growing stronger and stronger, till I could hardly bear to look at it. As it grew stronger, it took the form of the glorious spirit I had seen before overshadowing H. J. L.

Like a silver trumpet he spoke: “Return and fetch from your bed your astral body.”

CHAPTER XXXIV

A VISIT WITH H. J. L. TO THE ASTRAL PLANE.

THE DREAMERS

At once I seemed to be caught up in strong hands and whirled away into space. Once more I stood within my bedroom, but instead of sinking into unconsciousness, I suddenly appeared clothed with a more substantial body than that which a moment before I had possessed. Yet my physical body still lay asleep in bed.

I turned at the sound of H. J. L.’s voice, and saw that he too looked different. For one thing, he looked older. In the spirit world he appeared a good deal younger than when on earth; here he looked stronger, but not so very much younger. There was also a more subtle difference, but I do not know how to describe it.

“This is not my own astral body,” explained H. J. L.; “that disintegrated almost as soon as I died, as I told you. This is only a temporary body made out of the astral elements which are floating about. I have done my best to impress my form upon it as I remember it upon earth. Now come with me.”

I noticed that the room seemed shadowy and semi-transparent; so did my body, which lay on the bed, and so, indeed, did all the earth phenomena.

The body I now wore seemed, however, solid and real, and we passed through the shadowy walls without the slightest difficulty.

I said to H. J. L., “Earth things and people now look to me as you do when I see you at Mr. K.’s clairvoyantly.”

H. J. L. “Yes, I can quite believe that. There are many astral beings who cannot see the physical world for a long time after they have passed over, just as ordinary earth-dwellers cannot see them.

“All the same, this double vision is a bit of a nuisance, so will that you shall see only the astral plane.”

I did so, and at once the shadowy house and landscape faded quietly away.

H. J. L. took my hands and said, “Quick!” and we seemed to be rushing through space. It seemed neither dark nor light, but betwixt and between, and then we stopped.

“Here come some of the dreamers,” said H. J. L., and we waited.

Now I could not see the landscape very clearly, for it seemed all grey and shrouded in mist, but I could perceive there were hills and dales and castles and woods, trees and wide expanses of water, but all was indistinct and grey.

“Is it always like this — grey and shadowy?” I inquired.

H. J. L. replied, “Oh dear, no. But you are more used to the spirit realms and so not attuned to these. But to many spirits who know no brighter place, this seems full of colors, but not even to all of them. This is a land of change, a half-way house, as it were, between the physical and the spiritual plane, therefore it seems somewhat unreal and changing to denizens of either plane. So, too, the elements which form it are ever changing, and, being very malleable, often assume forms in consonance with the wills of those who pass through them, even when they are sleepers dreaming. You understand form which is eternal goes to the spirit plane; hence form here is not stable except where it is the living astral form. I mean the elemental forms have no stable form of their own.

“But see, here come a few of the visitors from earth to us.”

As he spoke, I noticed that large bands of spirits were floating towards us; soon more and more passed swiftly by. Then it grew into a continuous stream. Sometimes there would come a crowd together, but at other times they would be spread out into ones and twos.

Ever and anon across this stream of dreamers would float a real denizen of the astral plane. It was easy to see the difference, but almost impossible to describe it in detail. However, one noticeable difference was that those still living on earth had trailing away behind them a thread of light. These threads, unlike material threads, never became entangled as the astral beings moved about. It seemed as if each cord was able to pass through any other cord without severing it.

There were many other differences more difficult to describe. When I turned to comparing these with myself, I perceived that many of them had their eyes shut, and with their arms stretched out in front of them they looked like people walking hi their sleep.

But not all were like this. Some had their eyes wide open, and seemed to be hunting for someone, and a few seemed to be idly wandering through a strange landscape, stopping every now and then to gaze at it. Such a motley crowd of all ages and conditions, not only men, women, and children, but even animals!

I saw a dog among the visitors, who caught sight of a rabbit, and at once gave chase.

“Now look at the dreams these people are dreaming and the friends they are seeking,” said H. J. L.

I noticed a woman; in front of her floated a thought visualization of a little child. The thought seemed to float away from her, and she kept following, crying bitterly. Then suddenly the real astral form of the child came running up, and in a moment the thought child was shattered, but the mother gave a glad cry and flung out her arms towards the astral and took it in her arms. She sat down there and then and hugged the child and talked to it just as she would have done on earth. The child, a boy, appeared to be about six years old.

Then I saw a man about thirty, who came with eyes wide open and evidently expecting to find someone. In a few moments he was met by a young woman.

“Who are these,” I said, “for I can see that they are both alive upon earth.”

H. J. L. replied, “I cannot say who they are, but I can tell you this about them: that man is twin soul to that girl. He has not met her yet on earth, but he has

on the astral plane. Whether they will ever meet on earth I do not know, but I hope so. But look at that pair."

I saw a man and woman approach each other with delight, but floating near the woman was a thought form of an elderly man. By his face I should say he was a Jew, and I knew, as by instinct, that this was the woman's husband, whom she had married for money, while the younger man, with whom she was now speaking, was the man she really loved, whom she had refused in order to marry the Jew.

"Now look at these," said H. J. L.

I heard an agonized shriek, and saw one man pursued by another who had a knife in his hand. The hunted man kept looking over his shoulder, and every now and then he gave a piercing shriek. His face was livid, and his whole attitude betokened abject fear.

"What does this mean?" I began.

H. J. L. "It's fairly obvious that for some reason the dark man considers he has been done a great wrong by the fair man, and when they meet on the astral plane, he acts as he would like to act on earth."

J. W. "Will they remember this experience when they awake on earth?"

H. J. L. "I can't say for certain, but I think they will each retain some remembrance, although it will very likely be a distorted one. But look, who is that?"

J. W. "Why, it's the pater! What on earth is he doing here?"

H. J. L. "Hardly an appropriate exclamation, eh? But why shouldn't your father come here; he's just dreaming like everyone else. Perhaps he'll recognize you."

But he went past, busily engaged in seeking for someone, and never seemed to see me, and as he passed I saw the thought form of his father floating before him.

"Will he meet his father here?" I inquired.

H. J. L. "Not very likely. Old Horatio is very comfortable in the division of faith without acts and not likely to come out here often."

My father disappeared among the crowd, and as for a moment there was a lull in the throng that were continually sweeping by us, I turned again to H. J. L. and said:

"Does 'place' exist on the astral plane in the same way as it does on earth?"

H. J. L. “To a certain extent, for not only have we, as you see, an astral landscape, but that landscape tends to correlate with the surface of the physical world. Thus, at the present minute we are near London: that is why there is such a crowd of spirits.

But though the landscape tends to correlate, our astral bodies are not bounded by time and space in the same way as they are on earth. We can rush from one part of the earth to another in next to no time. Nor do the astral landscapes exactly correspond to landscapes on earth, for there are, as it were, many layers of astral landscape; because the same district at various periods of the earth’s history will present very different aspects, as, for example, the site of London has not only held prehistoric forest, but at times it has been covered by the ocean itself.”

J. W. “This landscape, so far as I can see it, is not the same as the one in which London now stands.”

H. J. L. “Of course, but it is some not very ancient past landscape. But see who comes here.”

J. W. “Why, it’s Carrie. The whole family seems to be here.”

H. J. L. “Oh no, they are not, but all the same a very large number of people do come night after night on to the astral plane. There are some people who have a regular and continuous life here, just as they have on earth, only when they awake, as a rule, they remember nothing of it. The *astral day* ends for them with falling asleep, just as the physical day does, and it is seldom that a very clear recollection of either state is carried into the other. More, however, is remembered by the astral memory than by the physical. Still, there are people who are alive on earth, yet when they are here they have no ecollection of it and imagine they live here only. Such people often Don’t even know when they die, but are surprised when they don’t fall asleep. Most astrals, however, do keep some remembrance of their earth life, and may come here with fixed recollections of some earth friend whom they desire to find. Many people also occasionally remember in a distorted manner fragments of their experiences here. There are also some who seldom, if ever, come here till death. They are so materialistic that the astral cannot escape from the physical. Gross feeders and heavy drinkers in particular chain their astral bodies to their physical; but I am going to speak to Carrie. See, she is seeking me.”

He made his way through the passing dreamers to where Carrie was standing, looking round as if seeking someone. I could see her thought visualization, and it was of her father as she remembered him sitting in his armchair in the

dining-room at L. She herself was clad in a long white dress of simple cut, but not precisely like anything I have ever seen her wear on earth.

As soon as she saw him, she hastened towards him with delight.

“How are you getting on, Boss? It’s such an age since I saw you.”

H. J. L. “Yes, it is. I’m glad you came here tonight. I’m right enough, but what do you think of the revelations we are sending through?”

She looked puzzled and said, “What revelations? I don’t remember any.”

H. J. L. “Oh, nonsense; yes, you do, only you are still half asleep. Wake up! The ones we are sending through by Jack. By-the-bye, here is Jack.”

Carrie then noticed me for the first time. I, though I had seen her from the first, had not obtruded my presence, wishing her to devote her time to H. J. L.

“Why, what are you doing here?” she began.

“Come to that,” I replied,” what are you? But, indeed, in my case it’s my usual Monday night’s excursion, and this time Boss has brought me to see you folk who enter the astral plane. I wonder whether you’ll remember having met me when you awake?”

H. J. L. “It’s not very likely. If she remembers anything at all it will probably be me, as that was the thought visualization which came here with her. Well, Carrie, do you recollect now?”

C.W. “Yes, I do remember vaguely, but like in a dream. But how are you yourself? I have not seen you for a long time.”

H. J. L. “Well, very well, nothing at all wrong. Never better in all my life. I wouldn’t be back on your poky, silly, shadowy earth for anything you could give. I’m hoping, though, that a few old friends will join me soon from your side.”

C. W. “Whose house is that?”

As she spoke I noticed rather a nice house in the late Georgian style. It had a small garden in front, and we found it had a much larger one behind.

H. J. L. “Oh, that’s the astral form of some house which has just been pulled down. It won’t remain long; the astrals of inanimate objects don’t last long unless someone takes possession of them and so links them with his personality. Let us go inside.”

C. W. “Why, it’s completely furnished!” said Carrie as we entered.

H. J. L. "So it is. That's rather peculiar here, though on the spiritual plane where the forms come it's the rule rather than the exception. I think it must have been burnt down and everything destroyed.

Yes, I'm sure it was, for see, some of the pictures are missing. Look at the blanks on the wall. Why, there is even the cord, too, hanging to the nails from which they hung. Someone evidently slashed through the cords with a knife and carried out a few of the best pictures. They didn't save much, though." As he spoke, the Boss sat down in an easy-chair by the fireplace in a room which had evidently been the dining-room.

"A very comfortable house," he commented; "plain, perhaps, but substantial. If I were still in the astral body I'd take possession of it."

Carrie. "Let's go into the garden." So she and I passed out through a door in the dining-room down a short flight of steps into the garden.

A few moments after the Boss appeared in the doorway, carrying on his shoulder a small leather-covered trunk. On reaching us, he placed it on the ground, raised the lid, and drew out a book.

"There, Carrie, fancy finding that here."

C. W. "Why, it's your old book, 'How to Make a House Healthy and Comfortable.' "

H. J. L. "Yes. I thought the house seemed very well brought up to date. Its owner was evidently a sensible man."

I (J. W.) was mildly amused at the obvious pleasure H. J, L. felt on discovering that the owner of the house had appreciated his book, but at that moment Carrie broke in, as we re-entered the room, "I'm feeling rather tired, so I will be off to bed."

I looked in surprise at H. J. L., who, however, appeared to take no notice of my inquiring look, but said, "Well, goodbye, then, for the present.

Come again soon. I am always glad to see you, you know, and will take care to be here when you do come."

Carrie then went out of the room, and as soon As she was out of sight (I noticed that the astral wall completely shut out astral figures) he said, "You were surprised that she said she was tired. What she really felt was the call of her physical to her astral body, but that was the easiest way for her to explain it. To most astrals still living on earth the change back from the astral to physical conditions seems like falling asleep.

"Now it is time you too were returning. See how the crowds who were hurrying outwards are now going back."

We looked out of the front door, and, sure enough, the dreamers seemed all to be moving back towards the direction from which they had come. Faster and faster they hurried by, and among them my father again repassed me with a disappointed look upon his face. He had not found the one he was seeking.

Fewer and fewer they grew, and I noticed the so-called "dead" bidding farewells, often with bitter tears, to those they loved and who were returning to the waking world.

Still fewer and fewer grew the "dreamers," and in proportion as they grew fewer, the number of real denizens of the astral plane increased.

Not all were pleasant to look at, and H. J. L. again spoke, "It is time for you to return;" and I seemed to fall asleep. — J. W.

Note. — C. W. remembered a considerable part of this meeting, but not all, and thought it was a dream.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE INFLUENCE OF THE WAR CLOUD

TRANCE VISION July 27th, 1914.

On reaching the college in which H. J. L. lived, I asked him, "Boss, do you think this storm cloud which has arisen in Europe will lead to war? Things begin to look rather black."

H. J. L: "I am afraid it will. Of course I am not closely in touch with the earth plane, but here men are saying that the astral plane is in a state of absolute chaos. All the evil spirits are crowding up there and are doing their best to precipitate war.

"Here we are beyond all that turmoil, but we are filled with strange forebodings. The next few days will, I think, decide it, but I have never made any pretensions to prophetic powers.

"Our work is drawing rapidly to its close, and it is well, for if there is war our little band of workers will certainly be dispersed. They will have different work to do.

"You are not well yourself. I can see, unless you are better by next week, it would be as well for you not to make any attempt to come here till you are all right again. When in sound health these excursions into the unknown can do

you no harm, but when ill you need all your vitality to fight the disease. In any case, you will not be able to do any automatic writing during the month you are lecturing at Cambridge.

“I do not propose that you should have an interview with the officer tonight.

“In the first place, you are not well enough to stand a lengthy stay here, and, secondly, the officer is in a very excited condition owing to the war cloud. He longs to be able to rejoin his old regiment, but several spirits have taken him in hand and are trying to calm him. We don’t want all our good work flung away, and in that way he can do no good. There is a field of activity open to him, which we shall point out in due course. Just now, however, he’s like a tiger that has scented blood, and it is largely his extraordinary behavior, coupled with what appears to be happening on the astral plane, that makes me fear for the worst.

“Now, goodbye. Take care of yourself and get well as soon as you can. The book must be finished off before you leave for Burma.”

So I returned to the earth plane, and noticed how tired I was as I re-entered my body. — J. W.

Note. — I went up to Cambridge on the 3rd, and all through August suffered from a sharp attack of Pleurisy. During the whole of that time I had no visions, nor did I attempt automatic writing. It was not till the 5th of September that I was able to resume automatic writing at Mr. K.’s house.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE WAR

LETTER FROM H. J. L. Sept. 5th, 1914.

“We must get on with the work as quickly as we can. The time lost owing to your illness is to be regretted, but it has at any rate enabled some little order to be restored in the astral plane. But the latter is still in a most chaotic state, and its reaction is beginning to be felt even in our plane.

“Of course the majority of the men who are passing over are young men, and go first to the astral plane. Huge crowds of spirits are pouring over, most of them still convulsed with hate, nearly all having died a violent death, and you can easily imagine the condition there. Many indeed do not even realize that they are dead, but ascribe their changed condition to some wound which has temporarily clouded their brain.

"The chief way, however, in which it affects the spirit plane is that a great call has gone forth for more enlightened spirits to come to the aid of the newcomers, and already countless hosts are pouring down to help. At present most of the helpers come from the two higher divisions of the spirit plane, but it is certain that some will go from our division also.

"As yet I am hardly fitted for such work, but when the call comes for me I shall answer it*, though I cannot pretend that I am looking forward to the turmoil of the astral plane after the peace and quiet I have enjoyed here.

"But enough of this subject; we must push on with the book, which I trust you will make every effort to get published, not immediately — of course, that is impossible — but presently, as the opportunity occurs; and we look to you, Mr. K., to write a preface**, explaining the circumstances under which these revelations were made.

"The officer will now take control. — H. J. L."

** The call came early in May 1916, when I went to him in the spirit plane, and told him my brother, R. L. Ward, had been killed in action. At once he went down to help him, and has been with him off and on ever since.*

*** Mr. K. agreed to do this.*

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE BAND OF SPIRIT FRIENDS IS DISPERSED. CONCLUSION

VISION OF H. J. L. Sept. 14th, 1914.

On arriving at the college in which H. J. L. lived, I found him seated there alone, save for the dog, Molly, who scrambled out from under the sofa to greet me. H. J. L. then began to speak:

"The work is now completed for the time being. Our little band of workers is scattered, and I alone remain amid the old surroundings. Soon you, too, will be undergoing new experiences in the East, which will tend to widen your outlook. You need have no anxiety as to the journey. You will arrive in Burma safely.

"Though for some time I shall not give you any communications of real interest, yet I shall expect you each Monday as usual. The door to this world having once been opened, we must take care that it does not close again, for after awhile I shall hope to start a new series of revelations, though their exact nature is yet unknown to me.

“Go carefully through what you have. You will have time to arrange the various contributions each under their proper headings, and thus you will have a fairly complete and continuous account of life over here.

“Hell, the astral plane, the realms of half belief, of real but narrow belief, and of belief shown forth in a life of good deeds, have all been revealed. Beyond these planes I as yet know nothing, but I do not despair of gaining some knowledge of life in the fifth plane.

“So henceforth consider me, as I know you will, not as sleeping an age-long sleep to be broken ultimately by the trumpets of judgment day, but as a man still much like yourself, but freed at last of the trammels of a body; no longer subject to pain, no longer needing material food or sleep, and therefore as one freed from the drudgery of life, dwelling among pleasant surroundings, with boundless opportunities, not for idle sloth and endless psalm-singing, but to study all subjects in which I am interested and the means to pursue those studies far further than any man can do on earth. Consider me able and anxious to help others, and by so doing preparing myself to, climb higher and higher from division to division, making new friends and learning new truths day by day as time seems to you.

“Consider me happy and contented in a measure, glad to have escaped from the material world, but do not think of me as absolutely happy yet.

“Perfect happiness is a long way off still, and can only be attained by steady effort concentrated by a set and determined will after many ages, during all of which the spirit is undergoing fresh experiences, and learning new truths.

“Think of me thus, at all times, busy alike with work and recreation. The work is that which will help me to climb upward step by step, the recreation that which on earth I considered as work.

“So bear my greetings to all who will receive them and come to me regularly week by week; and now goodbye for the present, thanking Mr. K., Mrs. K., and all who have assisted me in this work.’

J. W. “Before I go, tell me what J. B. P. and the officer and A. are doing.”

H. J. L. “The officer is shortly, after a little more training, to go down to the astral plane to help the thousands who are being hurled into the new life they will find there; and badly they will need all the help they can get, cut off thus in the prime of life. But help they will receive. “J. B. P. has already gone down again into Hell. A. is still struggling to learn the simple lessons of the school where I was so long ago.”

J. W. "Yes, to you it must seem long; and yet as earth reckons time it is only nine months since you passed over."

H. J. L. "Yes; but time here counts by experience and not by hours, if indeed one can call it time, and even on earth I think by the time Dec. 31st has arrived not only you, but the whole world, will say, 'this is the longest year we have ever known;' but now goodbye once again."

And so we parted. And to and fro since then I have journeyed, and always had a ready welcome, but little of special interest — merely family news and such small-talk — though all the time I know J. H. L. was working at various profound subjects.

But at length the fatal day came when I sought his aid on behalf of my brother, and that aid was given ungrudgingly. And now my weekly visits are devoted in the main to the astral plane, of which before long I hope to write a fuller account.

PART II

'The Officer'

AUTOMATIC WRITING IN TRANCE STATE BY J. W. WITNESSED BY MR K.

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST LETTER FROM 'THE OFFICER'.

HIS PASSING OVER

(For an account of his life on earth, see H. J. L., 24th January 1914)

Feb. 7th,1914.

"I will start by stating a few facts which you must grasp so as to realize what life is like here in Hell.

"Spirits over here fall into the following groups: —

"(1) Spirits of dead men or animals.

"(2) Spirits who have never been incarnated.

"(3) Spirits who come from other planes, etc.

"Of these the discarnate spirits may be divided as follows: —: .

"(1) Elementals — good, bad, or both good and bad,.

"(2) Vices personified,

"(3) Evil spirits created by the thoughts of men,

e.g. the devils of our childhood days.

"Now the elementals are the most numerous, especially on the astral plane, and most of those that are there are bad. The other non-carnate beings are

met with in the higher spheres, and the mixed ones often take an active interest in world affairs. Some are the guardian spirits, who watch over great nations, others over societies, and so forth.

"This explains the fact that England as a nation has a distinct personality, quite distinct from that of any or all the separate individuals who form it.

"Now I hope these first remarks will enable you to get some idea of the type of beings other than men we meet here. They are not much in evidence in the set of half belief, but the higher types, of whom I, as yet, alas! know little, reappear in the higher sets.

They include some of the angels and teachers; but many of these were men who, having learnt, return to teach. You cannot easily divide and classify the various spirits.

"I will now start an account of my death. I was walking along the Strand when a beastly motorbus knocked me down and ran over me. I should have seen it, only I admit I had been having rather a number of glasses of whisky and was not quite myself.

Now the funny part is this, after the accident I got up, felt a little shaken, and, seeing a crowd gathering, decided to hurry on to the office where I was to sign the agreement for that patent.

"When I reached the door of the office I knocked, but to my surprise my hand seemed to go through.

No one answered, so I tried to push open the door, and, next moment I found I had gone clean through.

"My word!' I said, 'I'm more drunk than I thought. Wonder if I had better go on.' However, seeing a flight of stairs, I went up them and knocked at the office door. Same result. Went through it.

"I found the man waiting at his desk and a clerk at a side table. I took off my hat and bowed, but the ill-mannered swab took no notice. I said, 'I've come to sign that agreement.' But again he did not answer, and next moment, turning to his clerk, said, 'If that damned fool doesn't come in ten minutes I shall go off to that other appointment.'

“ ‘I’m here, you fool!’ I shouted, but he took no notice, and in spite of everything I could do he at length got up and, after cursing me roundly for not coming, went out.

“I swore and cursed too; so at length I went out, saying to myself, ‘He’s more drunk than I am.’

“Again I seemed to slip through the door, but as I did so I heard a fiendish chuckle, and, turning round, saw old Billy, a former pal of mine.

“ ‘Why, Billy,’ I said, ‘thought you were dead.’

“ ‘So I am,’ he replied; ‘and so are you at last, old sport. You’re dead at last. I thought we were never going to get you.’

“ ‘You damned liar, I’m not dead; I’m quite alive, only rather drunk.’

“ ‘Drunk!’ squealed Billy. ‘Even when drunk you can’t walk through doors, and aren’t invisible. Why didn’t that fellow see you if you were only drunk?’

“Then suddenly I knew it was true, and immediately I wanted to go in search of my body. We had reached the street, and at that minute Billy saw a nice-looking girl.

“ ‘See that girl?’ he shouted to me.

“ ‘Yes’ I replied; ‘ but you need not yell so.’

“ ‘You fool, she can’t hear us. I’m going after her.’

“ ‘What’s the use?’ I asked. ‘She’s not that sort.’

CHAPTER II

FIRST EXPERIENCES ON THE ASTRAL PLANE.

THE DRINKING DEN

SECOND LETTER FROM ‘The Officer’

“He took me away I know not where, but it was into an awful darkness. Soon I was aware of a vast crowd of other spirits.

“ ‘Where am I?’ I cried to my guide.

“ ‘Where would you like to be’ he asked. ‘Whatever place you wish to go to you shall.’

“ ‘I want a drink,’ I cried.

“ ‘Come along,’ he replied. ‘We have one here who looks after all who thirst.’ In a moment I was aware of a howling mob, and over them presided a being.

How shall I describe him? He most closely resembled a drunken man, low, bestial, sodden with drink, foul in every way.

“There was nothing grand or majestic about him, nothing of what Milton describes of ruined splendor. The nearest thing you can ever have seen is some drink-sodden wretch thrown out of a ‘pub at closing time. He leered, and we all yelled, ‘Drink! Give us drink!’

“ ‘Come with me’ he seemed to say; ‘but you will have to work first.’

“In a moment we were in a large, low drinking den, somewhere, I should think, in the east end of London. It was crowded with low men and women and even children.

“Oh, what a lovely, smell of gin and whisky there was! It is true there was rather too much loaded cheap beer, still, one can’t be too particular.

“But when I wanted to get hold of a glass of beer which was standing on the bar I was quite unable to hold it. The desire for it grew stronger and stronger, and I seemed to contort myself with a kind of mad fury. I looked at the drink guide, and he was laughing and jeering and mocking me. At last he said, ‘Work, you lazy brute’

“ ‘How can I?’

“ ‘Look what the others are doing.’

“Then I noticed that many of the others were twining themselves round the men and women who were drinking. I cannot exactly describe how they did it, but they seemed to be insinuating themselves into their carcasses.

“Suddenly I saw a man who was already fairly tipsy drop in a kind of drunken stupor. At once a spirit who had been twining round began to fade into him and soon seemed to be absorbed into him. He was gone, and lo! the man staggered to his feet and yelled, ‘More beer, you ––––!’ “I won’t say what.”

The barmaid gave him some more; but I could see that it was not the drunk man but my spirit companion who was, as it were, shining out of his eyes. He drank and drank and got more and more violent, till at length the chucker-out seized him by the shoulder.

He at once seized a quart pot and felled the man.

The blow was terrific and split the fellow’s skull.

“Then there was pandemonium. Many of the drinkers rushed out shouting ‘Murder.’ With them in some cases went the spirits who had twined themselves round them, but others seemed to cast them off. .

“I noticed for the first time that these spirits were divisible into two groups — those who were obviously men and those who were not. The latter had various forms, all more or less bestial. I cannot describe them. They were foul, misshapen things, not human or animal, sometimes composite, with animal heads and human bodies, some heads only, some foul monstrosities with no shape or form, things one might see in D.T., but nowhere else.

“Meanwhile the drunkard who had felled the chucker-out stood waving his beer pot. Then I heard a fierce, wild yell of laughter, and saw our guide laughing and cheering.

“We all began to cheer too — why, I don’t know.

Then the companion who had taken possession of the drunkard, began to disentangle himself from him as it were. He was out, and lo! the man collapsed in a heap.

“ ‘He’s dead, I suppose’ I said to a friend — it was old Billy.

“ ‘Oh no, only drunk, but he’ll swing for it, I expect, so we shall soon have another to join our merry throng.”

“ ‘But it was not really he that did it.’

“ ‘Of course not; but who’s going to tell the jury that? They’ll learn he’s had a grudge against the chucker-out and has several times sworn “to do him in.” Are you going to witness to the truth?’ He laughed, and so did the others.

“Just then a policeman entered, and soon a dozen people were busy explaining what had happened.

Several more men in blue entered and picked up the drunken man and carried him out.

“ ‘Well done!’ said the ‘Grand Master of the Ceremonies’ as Billy facetiously called him. ‘Well, now, you others, go and do likewise.’

“The drinking started again, and after a time I found in some way I could get a sort of satisfaction by twining round a man. It was not exactly drinking, being more akin to the satisfaction one used to get from smelling alcoholic spirits. But it was grand and yet unsatisfactory, a sort of Dead Sea fruit. So we hung round that pub for many a day, and I learnt even to take possession.

“I can’t and won’t describe how we got possession, but it’s something similar to the way in which I am now able to write. You need not fear. I don’t wish to do these things now, and if I did there, is a great guardian spirit who stands by you, not to mention your own father-in-law.

“Now I must give you a rest, as Mr. L. has arranged. Besides, I have told you enough about the drinking den. So rest for half an hour, and we will go one stop further in the next letter.

“This ends letter two by me. — THE OFFICER.”

CHAPTER THREE

THE DENIZENS OF THE ASTRAL PLANE

STILL CONTROLLED BY ‘The Officer’ (SPOKEN)

“Now I think I had better explain who the drink guide is. He is not an elemental, nor is he the figure conjured up by the thoughts of men. He is created by the lust of all who desire drink, i.e. to excess. If all the world were to cease to desire strong drink tomorrow, he would gradually fade away. Not at once, because we over here would be able to sustain — him for a little, but as we should no longer be able to gratify, even in the shadowy way I have described, our lust for drink, in time he would fade away for want of sustenance. So, too, with all the lusts we know of.

The old idea of the seven deadly sins was not so far out, but there are a jolly sight more than seven.

“The demons created by the imagination of men fade as the men who have created them, by thinking of them move, on, but, unfortunately, they are always being re-created by other men. Some parsons do quite a lot towards peopling Hell with devils. While there they torment, as we have been taught to believe they would. Those who have not been taught about them don’t see them.’

“The elementals are quite different. They exist of themselves as much as we do. How they originally came into existence I do not know, but you must not suppose they are all bad just because I speak of them as such here. There are blithe, light-hearted spirits who haunt dells and woodland glades — the fairies of our childhood. Innocent children do still occasionally see them, but, as they are laughed at for their pains, they cease to believe in them, and so lose the power.

“There are many types of elementals, spirits who inhabit the winds, and so forth. I shall for the present deal mainly with the evil ones. But even among them, as among men, there are degrees of wickedness. I believe, too, they are capable of progress, but exactly how I cannot say for certain.

“Sometimes a dead man continues to take an interest in his family and tries to watch over it. Sometimes he is able to give it premonitions and warnings.

“But often death warnings are given by elementals who come scenting death. These come hoping to be able to draw some physical substance from the dying person.

“This naturally leads one to the subject of vampirism, which is fortunately rare, though it does occur, not, however, in the crude form usually related in legend.

“This, now, has given a glimpse, a rather horrible one, of some of the beings whom we meet here.

“Thanks awfully for your kindness. I will give you more information next time. “If it revolts your gentle soul, Mrs. K., forgive me; but I have to give it.

So good-bye, and thank you. — THE OFFICER.”

H. J. L. took control; “Thanks for your kindness, Mr. and Mrs. K., but I consider that what the officer can tell is perhaps almost the most valuable part of all this work. — H. J. L.

CHAPTER IV

AN INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF ‘The Officer’ UPON EARTH

A VISION SEEN IN A BOTTLE OF WATER BY J. W. AT MR K.’s AT 7:40 ON FEB. 10th, 1914.

FROM NOTES TAKEN DOWN BY MR. K.

“I see clouds of smoke, A spot of light, large flashes of light, a blaze of it absorbing the whole bottle. Grass, miles of it, burnt-up grass, yellow and dry. Great mountains piled high one above the other into the far distance, and some of them crowned with snow. We are in a valley between steep mountains, with a stream running down it. .

“Three men come riding up it dressed in khaki-soldiers. They are riding up a steep path on one side of the valley. The flash of a gun — a man drops — another flash and the horse of the second man drops. The rider of the wounded horse gets up and seizes the bridle of the horse of the wounded man. The third man, who is unwounded, turns and rides for his life, leaving the other two behind.

“The unwounded man, who remains, leans down, and, picking up the injured man, places him on the horse which he has captured, and jumps up behind him.

"Heavy firing all the time; heads appear, some with turbans. One of them hurls a great rock down the side of the hill. The soldier urges his horse forward full gallop, and the rock passes behind him. Another rock rushes past just in front of the horse. More rocks come crashing down, but miss the fugitives. Firing continues. The path goes under the side of an over-hanging rock which shelters them, for the boulders leap clean over them and fall crashing into the valley below.

"They are out of range now. Reach the valley in safety. Here the unwounded man meets the one who ran and hurls his revolver full in his face. The coward falls from his horse stunned.

"The man who rescued the wounded man is very clearly visible. He is about forty-years old, a sallow face much lined, a moustache and dark hair. He has hard blue eyes and an unpleasant mouth, and a rather hooked nose. He looks strong, but hard and ruthless. He rides on and meets a detachment of troops coming up the valley. They help him to dismount, and put the wounded man on a stretcher. Several officers shake hands with him. The troops advance rapidly.

He goes with them. They sweep up the valley. A great cloud of dust blots them out. Can see them again. They are storming the hillside. Boulders are hurtling down the slope. Again the dust blots them out. Once more can see them. They are much higher up. They are storming the crest. The hillsmen are mown down by the rifle fire, and drop like rabbits.

"Again a great cloud of dust covers the whole picture and blots it from view. Nothing but dust. The bottle of water begins to reappear.

"That is all."

FOURTH LETTER FROM "THE OFFICER," WRITTEN AUTOMATICALLY IN TRANCE, FEB. 10th, 1914, AT MR. K.'s HOUSE, 8 P.M.

The Officer. "You must not expect anything very pleasant as yet from me. You want the truth, and you shall have it. It is well that the world should know the truth, and not only the rosy side of it.

"I told you of the drinking den, and before I go on further I had better describe and explain what the vision you saw means.

"It shows an incident in my early life. I rescued a man under fire when a cowardly skunk ran away. That was I. You hear nothing but bad about me, still, I had a few sparks of better things.

“Now to proceed with my story. I need not go through all our life here. Just as we went to a pub, we also went to a bad house.

“The great guide over lust is a spirit like a woman, but foul beyond compare, loathsome in every way. I will not go into details, but, as we could get a Dead

Sea fruit satisfaction at the pub, so we can in like manner satisfy almost all our lusts. Satisfy, did I say? No, just the reverse. That is our punishment, the craving for what we want but cannot really attain. Oh, the Hell of it! for all the while we are helping to drag down others.

“Oh, what fools these mortals are! Do you suppose you can give rein to evil and not suffer and not make others suffer?

“I think you had better rest for half an hour.”

CHAPTER V

A SÉANCE

LETTER FROM ‘THE OFFICER’. March 7th.

“After a while I began to find that drink dens bored me a little. Then the dark spirit who acted as my guide said to me ‘shall we go to a séance?’

“ ‘What for?’ I inquired.

“ ‘Well, much fun can be derived from some of them,’ he answered.

“ ‘Nothing else?’ I inquired.

“ ‘Yes, if you are not careful to maintain the supply of semi-material elements which form this body you wear here, you’ll find yourself losing it and dropping down to Hell.’

“ ‘Am I not in Hell now?’

“ ‘No, you are still on the earth plane. You’d quickly feel the difference if you were in Hell; really in Hell.’

“ ‘I’ll do anything to keep this body going,’ I cried.

‘Now explain matters to me. I once went to a séance .

I certainly could not account for everything I saw, but put it down to fraud.’

“He replied, ‘These séances fall into three main divisions, but often there is a good deal of over-lapping:

(1) Genuine ones where the medium is controlled by a good spirit.

(2) Genuine cases where the medium is controlled by evil spirits, like ourselves.

(3) Fraud.

“ ‘Now, of course, we can’t do anything with No. 1, and No. 3 is useless, but No. 2 is different, and often we succeed in leading astray a medium and converting her into No. 2.’

“I inquired, ‘What is it that enables you to get control?’

“He answered, ‘If the medium uses her power for her own selfish ends, to advance her own fortunes, etc., then we can get control.’

“ ‘Do you mean that they may not take money?’

“ ‘Oh no, a medium, just like a parson, has to live. You don’t think any the worse of a parson because in time he gets a vicarage with £400 a year. A vicar may become a bishop at £3000, but he does not cease to be a good priest necessarily by that fact. If, however, a parson, instead of trying to help his fellow-men, devotes his whole time to getting on in position and fortune, you would at once say he was not a good priest. So with mediums. It’s the motive, and there is no deceiving *us* in that. Once the motive becomes low, then comes *our* chance.’

“ ‘What good to ourselves do we gain by doing this sort of work? ‘I asked.

“He leered.’ First, you gain material elements for this psychic body. Then you gain power. Power! Doesn’t that word make you think? Isn’t it splendid to be able to lead many people by the nose? Above All ‘ — and here he leered even more villainously than before — ‘we can pay off old scores, and even occasionally obtain a temporary incarnation. Now, isn’t that worth striving for? Again to walk the earth knowing all you have learnt here — eh?’

“I seized on the idea, and soon, with a band of other spirits, we congregated in a room where a woman was sitting surrounded by about a dozen men and women. Beside her stood a great spirit of light, the first I had seen, but he was sore beset by a mob of evil spirits. Again and again he hurled us back, but at length one evil spirit obtained control. Then a howl of delight rose from us all, and we rushed round her and began to form a complete ball of spirits round, above, and below her.

“ ‘What are we doing?’ I asked my evil guide.

“ ‘We are insulating her from the influence of her guardian angel. He cannot penetrate this wall of evil, any more than we can penetrate the wall of good which is around the best mediums. Now watch the spirit who has got to work.’

“The medium began to speak. Turning to a middle-aged woman, she said, ‘I am your sister Sally,’ and proceeded to give several pieces of evidence.

“ ‘How does he know all these facts’ I asked.

“ ‘Easy enough. He’s hung round this medium for years, and learnt all sorts of useful information. Now watch him.’

“A man in the room spoke.

“ ‘Can you give me any *useful* information? I mean something of *practical* value?’

“ ‘I’ll ask your brother George! the spirit replied, and then, assuming that character, said, ‘On financial matters I wish to give you a useful hint, Henry. Come here, and I’ll whisper it in your ear.’ He gave him some advice on certain stocks that the man held, and the latter seemed pleased.

“ ‘You’ll make a pile of money by that,’ the spirit added.

“ ‘Is that true?’ I inquired.

“ ‘Yes, it is, though often we give false advice to ruin our dupes, but sometimes we give genuine information either so as to lead them on, or else so as to keep them engrossed in earthly matters and so prevent them learning more important spiritual truths. Now watch.’

“The medium approached a young woman.

“ ‘I know what is in your mind, my dear. Yes, accept him. He will make you a good husband. Don’t listen to the lies which are told you about him.’

“ ‘What is the object of that advice’ I asked.

“My guide replied, ‘The man who has asked her to marry him is a drunken beast, and a blackguard. He’ll drag her down, and then we shall get her.

“ ‘Now see this spirit. He was a jovial hooligan on earth. You’ll see some fun.’

“Sure enough, a new control came and began to play all manner of tricks, some harmless, others distinctly malicious, but none quite so devilishly cunning as those of the other spirit. He moved things about and threw them across the room; he hit several persons sharp blows on the head, and hid various objects. He even stole articles out of the sitters’ pockets without their knowledge. Nearly all these things were done without any visible contact. Finally, he tipped up the table and upset half the audience. Then we departed.

“ ‘The beauty of these manifestations is’ said my guide ‘that they are the only sort of proof that some materialistic beings will accept of the spirit power. Thus many good mediums and controls have to exhibit them, and so we get

our insidious messages accepted by the audience on the strength of them. Above all, they wreck the medium and give us power, and often incidentally bring discredit on these *séances* generally.

We don't like genuine, good mediums and spiritualism generally. They teach and warn too much.'

"Then we went away, but soon returned, and in my next I will show the result.

"From the above you will doubtless see why I am describing these séances; but there are other reasons. All that is put down here is for a reason; it's all planned out; and if you don't at first see the reason, why, be patient, and you will learn. — THE OFFICER."

The officer then spoke.

He said, "I have been down to the very bottommost depth of Hell, impelled largely by that intangible thing — a strong personality. Like a burning fire it drives one on the path one has chosen, and for me there was no hope until that path had been trod.

"The personality made evil by an evil life remains evil after death, and the more probably will it go to the logical conclusion which its evil deeds naturally setup.

"You say, 'To know all is to forgive all,' and he who has been to the bottom of Hell may yet rise to the top, and the knowledge so acquired will be of far more value to himself and the world in general than the lesser knowledge acquired by a feebler soul who did no great evil and very little good."

Being asked whether a soul could ever become annihilated by persistent refusal to repent, he said,

"It is obvious that a man could not be punished indefinitely for what took place in a finite period. You mean therefore for faults committed after death, which is infinity? "

Being answered "Yes," he replied, "What is the soul? "

Mr. K. replied, "A part of God."

He answered, "Precisely. How, then, can God annihilate even a part of Himself? Sooner or later a soul will turn to God, but it may be countless ages before that happens." He then ceased.

CHAPTER VI

HE FALLS FROM THE ASTRAL PLANE INTO HELL

SECOND LETTER FROM "OFFICER" 9:50 P.M. (SAME DATE)

"One day, if so I can call it, when we went to one of the *séances,* I suddenly recognized an old enemy of mine. This man I hated. He had helped to bring about an exposure of my methods. I had learnt to control one of these mediums, as described in my last letter.

"As soon as I saw him, a wild desire to be revenged arose in my mind. There were plenty of spirits at hand to suggest methods. One was that I should get hold of some hooligans and make them murder him; another, to wreck him financially; and so forth. But a far more ingenious method occurred after a while to me. I found that he had begun to dabble in the occult.

He did not know much about it, and his motives were by no means exalted, being in the main curiosity.

"I haunted him day by day and watched his every movement. Whenever an opportunity occurred, I did him an evil turn. If he played cards, I told his opponent what cards he held, and so he lost money. I put in men's minds a vague sense of suspicion and distrust concerning his most innocent acts. But this sort of thing was not the ultimate aim of my attentions.

"At last my chance came, as I knew it would. He had been endeavoring 'to get outside his body' as he described it. He had no noble aim, and his guide's power had grown weak from various causes, and so when he at length did go out of his body — for about the third time — I came in. 'Ha! Ha!' "

I chuckled, as once more I found a body clothing me: 'This is like old times.' But it wasn't. I found that it was only by the exertion of my will power that I was able to retain control of this borrowed carcass. Anyone with a weaker personality than mine would soon have been compelled to go out again, but I was a far more powerful character than he, and I held it for as long as was necessary. Then I set to work to pay off old scores, and commenced by wrecking his home. I seemed to everyone to be the man himself who all the time was hanging on, still attached by the vital cord to the body, which he nevertheless could not re-enter. I treated his wife so badly that she soon left him in disgust, taking their child with her, and instituted divorce proceedings.

I gave rein to all the lusts, such as drink, which could damage his body, and dragged his good name in the gutter by various shady practices. Yet I took care to keep clear of the law.

“But I had to work quickly, and soon completed my task thus: I went to a jeweler’s shop, stole a quantity of jewels, murdered the man who owned them, and managed to get caught in my enemy’s body. I still held on to that body until it had been formally committed on the charge of murder, and then in the cell I left it. As I did so, I jeered at the waiting spirit who hastened to clothe itself again.

“When the case came up for trial, I was there, though invisible. The man maintained that he knew nothing of all the facts stated against him, as of course he didn’t. Though he knew it as a spirit, he had not been able to register it on his physical brain.

His barrister tried the plea of temporary insanity, but, as the judge said in summing up, ‘Some people argue that all sin is insanity, but we cannot accept that. There is far too much method in this madness.

The facts borne out by all the witnesses show that this was only the culminating and logical conclusion of those other detestable acts to which even his wife in her separation suit has borne witness.’ Then came the usual penalty — death.

“Now my joy was almost complete; but gradually various things intervened to mar it. He still vowed his innocence, though it made no difference to his ultimate fate. Further, his wife, who, in spite of his genuine faults, loved him still, and of course knew him well, believed him when he declared that he had no recollection of all his various misdeeds; she accepted the view that he had been temporarily insane.

“This had the effect of softening his rebellious spirit, which at first seemed likely to drag him down at the moment of death and make him join us. The prison chaplain also believed him and consoled him, despite all I could do to prevent it. In short, when we gathered at the execution, expecting an angry and revengeful spirit who would be compelled to join us, and over whom I, having a stronger personality, could dominate, we found quite a band of spirits of light, who surrounded him with a guard and kept us at bay and took him away whither we knew not. These events took place in the United States.

“Suddenly I became aware of the fact that a change was taking place in me. My psychic body seemed to be slipping from me, and, strive as I would, I could not hold it.

“ ‘Where am I going? ‘ I cried to the evil guide who haunted me.

“ ‘To Hell,’ he replied; ‘don’t you think it’s time?’

“ ‘But you said that by doing these things I should keep nourishing this psychic body?’

“ ‘For a time, I said; and so you did. Anyway, you are leaving it now.’

“ ‘What is this other body in which I am clothed?’ I cried despairingly.

“ ‘Your spiritual body,” he answered, ‘and in it you will really begin to suffer.’

“And as he spoke I realized how he gloated over me. How I loathed him! But it was so, and was in Hell and not yet at the bottom. That, alas! was still to come. But I have written enough tonight.

“There is a warning in almost every line of this, so do not think these revelations are unnecessary. Study them and think them over. Mr. L. will now take control to close.

“Good-bye for the present. — THE OFFICER.”

CHAPTER VII

IN HELL. THE CITY OF HATE (ROME)

LETTER FROM ‘THE OFFICER’ March 28th, 1913, 9:30.

The Officer. “When I left off last time, I had told you that I had at length sunk into Hell itself. This was different in many ways from the earth plane. I seemed to be falling through space, black, dark, and horrible. At length I reached what appeared to be firm ground, for I discovered a kind of path, and scrambling on to this made my way along it as best I could. Every now and then I slipped off into the horrible filth. All was utter darkness, and the marvel was that I got along at all. I felt drawn in a certain direction by some strange attraction, and ultimately found myself on a desolate, stony plane which appeared to be covered with ashes. Still drawn on through the darkness, I stumbled and struggled on, longing for some human society, be it never so degraded.

Then gradually I began to get a sort of half sight, and by means of it was able dimly to perceive that I was drawing near to some huge mass, which in time grew into the walls and battlements of a great city. Soon I stood before it and saw that it stretched right away as far as I could perceive, though this was not far. There was a gateway, and towards it I turned my steps. No sooner had I come in front of it and noticed that it was built in the manner of a great Roman gateway than what seemed to be doors opened and I passed in: I had hardly done so, when a fiendish yell rang out, and two hideous beings, who apparently acted the part of wardens of the gate, sprang at me.

“Then I knew that all spirits I should meet here would be enemies, and I turned savagely upon them —prepared to battle for life, I was almost going to say, but of course that sounds absurd. Fight, however, I would, and even as I made up my will to do it, the wretched creatures turned and fled. Thus I learnt my first lesson about Hell. There is no law here. The strongest oppresses the weakest, and strength lies in the will and in the intellect.

“I pursued my way unmolested for a time, and found that I could now distinguish the various buildings as through a dense fog. Gradually the idea grew upon me that I recognized this city — it was ancient Rome! Yes, but far more than that, for to it had been added all the buildings which had been built there since the days of the Caesars; and in time I learnt the truth. This was the spirit city of Rome, and many other cities, built of the buildings in which had been committed all the deeds of cruelty and hate. All the evil emanations which had been thrown off by its former inhabitants had gone to build up this Imperial City of Hell. Its better emanations had gone elsewhere, to the realms above; and this is the fate of every city or building on earth. Its evil side is dragged down to Hell, just as its form goes to the realms of half belief or of full belief.

“Here I found was not only Rome, but Venice and Milan, and a thousand other cities in which hate and cruelty had reigned. This vast city is not the only city in Hell. There are countless others. To each of these cities of Hate the damned are drawn, according as the natural laws of attraction act, some to one, some to another. Besides cities of hate, there are many others, such as the cities of lust: Paris and London may be found there. London, or parts of it, may be found in many of these ‘cities’ each part differing; for London at different times has had many different forms.

“Through the dirty, foul, and yet splendid streets I wended my way. Often I met men and women, many of them clad apparently in the kind of clothes they wore on earth. But these robes were foul and torn. Some of them rushed at me to attack me, but each one I was able to repel by means of my will power. Then an idea came to me. Why should I not attack one of them, make him my slave, and compel him to tell me about this new city in which I had to dwell?

“Acting on this, I sprang at a man, who turned with a shriek and fled. But I willed that he should come to me, and slowly he crawled back, struggling all the while. When I had him, I made him grovel in anguish, just to show him I was master, then bade him rise and show me the sights of the place. Whining, he did so, and led me to various buildings.

“ ‘Would you like to see a gladiatorial show?’ he inquired.

“ ‘Yes!’ I cried.

“Soon we were in what seemed like the Coliseum, and I saw that the place was full. Seizing a man, I hurled him out; there was a foul-looking woman seated next, and I threw her out also. We two then sat down.

“The show had just begun, and I saw that opposite us was a great royal box.

“ ‘Yonder is the Emperor!’ whispered my slave in an awestruck voice.

“ ‘Which?’ I inquired.

“ ‘I don’t know, but he is the Emperor, and he rules this part of the city.’

“ ‘Are there several Emperors here’ I inquired.

“ ‘Yes, many, and kings and generals too.’

“ ‘Don’t they quarrel?’

“ ‘Quarrel! Where have you come from, stranger? We all quarrel here. This is the City of Hate and Cruelty. We are constantly fighting against each other, district against district, Emperor against Emperor.’

“ ‘We have just conquered a district near here, and therefore the Emperor is celebrating his victory by making the prisoners fight with the gladiators. Here they come’

“Then began the most ghastly show I have ever witnessed; all the horrors of an ancient gladiatorial show without one redeeming feature were enacted before our eyes. There was no noble martyrdom to relieve the beastliness of the whole show. It was not merely men against men, but men against women, and even against children. Tortures of every description were inflicted, and the wretched victims shrieked and screamed. It was just as if the scene was on earth, save that no death came to release the victims. On and on it went. Now, as I write it and you read it, the effect is to produce a sense of pity and nausea. But at that time the effect was the reverse. It pandered to my worst side and roused a fierce lust of cruelty and hate; and so it did in others’

“This was the object of the Emperor. Now farewell, I will write more another day. — THE OFFICER.”

CHAPTER VIII

THE EMPEROR. A THEATER IN HELL

TRANCE CONVERSATION WITH 'The Officer'

THE PRESENCE OF H. J. L.

March 30th

The new-comer's face was as I described it when I saw him clairvoyantly. It was a strong face, but not a pleasant one. Nevertheless, I thought it looked much less marked with evil than it had done when last I saw him.

I greeted him in a friendly spirit, and he at once took up the thread of his narrative where he had dropped it in his last letter.

The Officer. "At length the show was over", and as we dispersed my slave and I took up our positions near a gateway to watch the egress of the Emperor". Soon a wild throng appeared around the Emperor's chariot. I noticed many spirits, both male and female, quite naked. —

"I said to my slave 'This is the first time I have seen naked spirits. We always seem to clothe ourselves by instinct.' _ "_ "

"He replied, 'These are compelled to assume this shape by the Emperor to amuse his evil passions.'

The Officer. " 'It is not possible for them, though, to have relations one with the other, is it?'

Slave. " 'Surely, master, you must know by now that, having no physical bodies, we cannot enjoy any physical pleasures. We can pretend to do these things, but it is all a hollow sham, a vain pretence. Our passions burn as fiercely as ever, but we have no bodies with which to gratify them.'

" 'What, are there animals in Hell? 'I cried, as several great hunting-dogs dashed past us.

"He replied, 'No, these are the spirits of men and women whom the Emperor compels to assume this shape, just as the others are compelled to appear naked or as children. He is so powerful that he can compel us to assume any shape he chooses, even that of his furniture. The latter is a favorite amusement of his.'

"The procession passed amid scenes of the wildest debauchery and cruelty. A long shriek of anguish rose as it slowly passed along. Various forms of torture were being inflicted, sometimes on the members of the Imperial *cortège*, and sometimes on the spectators who lined the route. In particular I noticed that

the dogs were repeatedly set to worry some of the women and men in the procession, or to drag spectators before the Emperor.

“On he rode in this chariot, the picture of cruelty and pride. His face was so lined by evil that it was almost impossible to realize what his original features had been like. I should think, however, that in his youth on earth he had been a handsome man, but evil had almost obliterated this.

“ ‘Who is he?’ I inquired. ‘Is he Nero?’

“My slave replied, ‘ No, master. I have forgotten who he was, but I do know he is not Nero. Nero is a slave to this man. Nero is a very feeble being compared with the Emperor, and though he has several times tried to raise rebellion against the Emperor, the latter has always crushed him sooner or later. Still, Nero is very cunning, and often escapes from the vigilance of those who have to guard him. Each time he is caught the Emperor inflicts the most excruciating torments upon him; indeed, torturing Nero is one of the Emperor’s favorite amusements.’

“ ‘But surely you must know who the Emperor was when alive’ I inquired.

“ ‘I’ve forgotten, if I ever knew.’

“ ‘You liar, you don’t forget. Tell me at once.’

“As I could get nothing out of him, I began to imagine the most horrible torments I could devise, and by willing that he should suffer them, caused him to writhe in anguish.

“As, however, he evidently did not know the name, I at last grew tired of this amusement and bade him rise and show me something else to entertain me.

“ ‘I will take you to a theater’ he answered.

“ ‘What sort of performance do you have here’

“ ‘Oh, extremely clever and exciting. They deal with all the famous cases of hate and cruelty which have occurred on earth, and if possible our managers try to get the original persons to re-enact the same scenes here as on earth.’

“ ‘Don’t you have anything dealing with lust or drink?’

“ ‘They come in as subsidiary parts of the plot; but this is the City of Hate and Cruelty, and, therefore, that is the dominant inspiration of all our plays here. In the cities of lust it is, of course, lust that dominates. Still, as the latter often produces cruelty, we see a fair number of representations of it and of other pleasant vices.’

“ ‘Are any fresh plays composed here?’

“ ‘Not many, and those are but a re-shuffling of the ideas which have been enacted on earth. However, there are plenty of real dramas of cruelty being enacted on earth every day, so we are never at a loss for a new play.’

“ ‘Nothing original ever comes out of Hell, I suppose’ I inquired.

“ ‘Nothing, so far as I know, but plenty of perversions and parodies from elsewhere’

“We now stood before the doors of a great theater. We had walked some distance, and here the buildings seemed fairly modern. The theater certainly was quite modern, but it looked dirty and neglected.

“The latter was, however, certainly not the case. On the contrary, people were hurrying through the doors in considerable numbers. We went with the crowd, and, once through the door, our ears were assailed by a fearful noise, due to the fact that almost everyone was quarrelling with his next-door neighbor, either alleging that he had pushed him or that he had tried to rob him, or for some other pretended reason.

At the booking-office a constant wrangle seemed to be in process between the booking-clerk and each person who came demanding a seat.

“Annoyed by the continual row, I called up all my will power, and, despite the angry protests of the crowd, forced my way through to the booking-office, dragging my slave with me. The latter, safe under my protection, did his best to hurt several of those we passed, and succeeded in catching a woman by the hair and throwing her on the ground, where the crowd ruthlessly trampled her underfoot.

“We made for the stalls, and on entering the theater proper I perceived that nearly half the audience were engaged in quarrelling and fighting. Close by us in the stalls a man and woman were fighting. They had evidently been people of good social position on earth, and their clothes, though dirty and torn, had at one time been expensive and fashionable. Yet these two fought like any people from the slums might have done, and as we watched, the man, who was evidently the stronger-willed, dashed the woman to the ground between the seats. He deliberately stamped upon her and then sat down on his seat and used her body as a footstool, pounding her every now and then, if she attempted to rise.

“Seeing us, he signaled us to pass him, adding, ‘Don’t mind her; just walk over her. I like to make a carpet of her; it does her good.’ To emphasize this he gave her a savage kick in the jaw.

“We walked across her to some seats beyond him which were vacant. It was a most extraordinary sensation, for her body, felt like real flesh and blood, and she squirmed and shrieked as if alive. Of course, she really did feel sufferings similar to those she would have felt on earth under the circumstances, but though our actions here show forth our wills, it is our wills which inflict the pain.

“Seated next to us were two women. Handsome they must have been at one time but they were rendered hideous by the expression of the most fiendish cruelty which overspread their faces. Their eyes were steel-blue grey, and the hair golden in hue. I surveyed them carefully for a minute or two and then the one nearest to me (who said her name was Rose) spoke.

“ ‘Well, I seem to fascinate you. What do you think of me?’

“I answered, ‘I think you were handsome once, but your cruelty has spoilt your looks. Still, one can’t be too particular in Hell. You’ll do, and your friend also. I shall take you both.’

“ ‘Well, we’ve got to be consulted first,’ she replied, ‘and I don’t intend to go with you.’

“I seized her hands at once. ‘Down on your knees and place your neck beneath my heel,’ I hissed.

“For a brief moment she tried to resist, then fell groaning and sobbing at my feet, and did as I bade her.

“ ‘Now sit back in your seat and remember you are my slave’ I said; and then, addressing the other, continued, ‘What’s your name?’

“ ‘Violet.’

“ ‘Indeed, a pretty name like your companion’s, especially for such a cruel devil as you are. However, I’m more savage still, so you had better obey me at once. Down on your knees and do as Rose did.’

“She did so without a murmur.

“After a little desultory conversation the curtain rose, and the noise of quarrelling gradually subsided as the plot unfolded itself.

“I do not propose to give you that plot. It suffices to say that though lust and vice of every description were there enacted in full detail before our eyes, it passed to its culminating point in the torture chamber of the Inquisition.

“My male slave, who had been sitting quietly up to now, here whispered, ‘We had better fly now master. At the end of this scene the Inquisitors invariably

raid the audience and carry some of them on to the stage to torture them.'

"Even as he ceased, the Grand Inquisitor stepped forward, and, pointing at him, cried, 'Come here, wretched man;' and the miserable creature, with livid terror written on his features, rose, and, as if drawn against his will, began to make his way out of his seat and towards the stage.

"I at once resented this, for he was my slave, and, once taken from me, I might not be able to recover him.

"It was an open assault on my domination, and I could not permit it. I rose at once.

" 'Let that man alone; he is mine. If you want to torture someone fresh, torture yourself.'

"A low shriek of excitement passed round the theater as the audience scented a fierce battle.

"The Chief Inquisitor glared at me..

" 'You are evidently a stranger here, or you would not dare to thus openly defy me. Well, it's time you learnt your first lesson. Come up on to this stage and do battle with me.'

" 'No, come down here' I answered; and then began a fierce battle between our wills. I have always had an iron will, and it stood me in good stead that day. The magnetic attraction sent out from the stage was tremendous, but I successfully resisted and willed that he should come to me. For a long time we thus struggled, when suddenly a yell broke from the audience. My enemy had been compelled to move a step forward. Next instant, however, he had sprung back again, and I felt myself jerked forward sharply. The yell from the audience had made my mind wander for a moment; but at once I redoubled my efforts, and ere long again he stepped towards me. This time, however, there was no return; again another step, and then he began to move slowly towards the edge of the platform. At the edge he hesitated and struggled desperately, then with a wild shriek pitched forward into the orchestra, the members of which scattered in all directions. A wild yell of delight arose from all who saw it.

"Then he rose and crawled slowly towards me, climbing over the stalls; and the audience got out of his way, for they still feared him.

"At length he knelt on the stall in front of me.

"Then I spoke: 'Go back to the stage, and I will follow.'

“I drove him before me, now completely beaten, vaulted lightly on to the stage, and there made his assistant inquisitors inflict all their most devilish torments upon him. The applause was deafening, and when we had seen enough and I turned to get down from the stage, a great shout arose.

“ ‘You shall be our Emperor; raise the standard of revolt against the tyrant.’

“But it did not suit me to enter at once on conflict with that powerful will. I needed to know more about this city before I attempted anything so risky. At the same time I knew that the conflict was bound to come, and knew also that it would be impossible to hide for long what had happened at the theater.

Once the Emperor knew what had happened, he would scent danger and take measures accordingly.

“I therefore replied, ‘Silence, I have no wish to rule here. So long as I am not attacked by him, I shall remain loyal to the Emperor.’

“At these words a titter ran round the building, and several murmured, ‘He’s afraid.’

“ ‘Silence, you dogs’ I shouted. ‘If you breathe one word of what has happened here, I will inflict the most horrible tortures on you that it is possible to imagine.’

“ ‘The Emperor will defend us from you,’ yelped a man in the stalls.

“In an instant I had him on the stage and bade the inquisitors flay him alive. If I use such material language, it is because by no other means can I convey what was done. It looked like flaying to the audience, and felt like it to the man, but of course there was no physical skin to flay. Nevertheless, the result was the same.

“Then I dismissed the spectators, and, calling to me the two women and my slave, myself left the building.

“ ‘I suppose you can find me a house?’ I inquired of the man.

“ ‘Yes, master. What of this one? It belongs to a well-known murderer, an Italian of the Renaissance. I think you would find it more convenient than one of the ancient Roman villas.’

“ ‘This will do,’ I answered.

“We hammered at the door, and a man-servant opened it and struck at me. In a moment I had hurled him on the floor.

“ ‘Stamp on his face’ I cried to my women, and Rose did so with the greatest delight. I rushed up a flight of marble stairs, all cracked and filthy, and into a

large salon. Here the master of the house sat surrounded by women. I sprang at him and hurled him out of the window, and appropriated for my own use the house and all it contained, including women and servants.

“Now, I think that is sufficient for this time.”

He rose, but I (J. W.) said, “Please stop a moment. I want to ask you one or two questions.”

H. J. L. thereupon remarked, “You had better be quick, for you have been here long enough.”

I nodded, and asked, “Can you give me any details about the gladiators which are likely to be unknown to the historians of the present day?”

Officer. “ ‘I don’t exactly know how much they know, but I expect they are fairly well up in the subject; there is, I believe, a fair amount of evidence about. Perhaps, however, you don’t know this fact: the gladiators advanced on one side in a sort of triangle and on the other in a solid phalanx. As soon as the triangle or point of the wedge struck the phalanx, the latter divided like a pair of scissors and then closed on the sides of the wedge. Do you understand this?”

“Quite,” I (J. W.) replied. “And which is the correct rendering of ‘thumbs reversed?’ Is it up or down to save the man?”

He smiled grimly.

“I am afraid I cannot answer that query. No question of saving any gladiator ever arose. Firstly, of course, they can’t die, and, secondly, no one in the city of hate ever desired to save any man from suffering. Half the interest in these shows lay in the fact that the victor tortured his conquered foe.”

“Now,” interposed H. J. L., “you must return.”

CHAPTER IX

A VISIT TO THE EMPEROR

TRANCE CONVERSATION, April, 6th

The Officer’s Narrative Continued.

“I do not think it necessary to give you in detail all that befell me in Hell. I set to work to gather round me a band of adherents. From them I demanded and obtained absolute obedience, but I allowed them to patrol the streets in bands, and attack and ill-treat all and sundry who fell into their hands. Large

numbers of former brigands and pirates, together with soldiers of fortune belonging to every age and country, hastened to join my bands. At length the inevitable happened, I received a summons to appear before the Emperor.

“I went, accompanied by a number of my retainers. As soon as we entered the presence chamber, a magnificent but dirty hall, the Emperor rose from his throne. This was raised up on a dais approached by three semicircular steps. He smiled at me in a manner which was meant to be engaging, but of course I could see the hatred and suspicion which was in his heart.

“That is one of the strangest things in that strange land. We still endeavor to deceive each other, and even think we can, although we know that others cannot really deceive us. We see the thoughts of others, and though our reason tells us that similarly others can see ours, yet some instinct still drives us on to attempt to deceive all with whom we come in contact.

“The Emperor spoke ‘Friend, you have already achieved much, seeing how short a time you have been in Hell.’

“I bowed. ‘Your Majesty has spoken truly, and I hope to achieve even more.’

“ ‘Even my throne’ he murmured. ‘But I assure you, you will not find it an easy seat. Still, that time has not arrived, and will not. Come, let us be friends, you and I. We will be like David and Jonathan, and between us we will extend the dominions over which I now rule. If needs be, like Anthony and Octavius, we can later fight over the spoils as to who shall own them. For the present, like those wise generals, let us unite our forces and compel the neighboring princes to acknowledge our dominion.

“ ‘Behold, I will make you my general, and you shall begin your career by attacking an upstart fellow called Danton who has terrorized an area near the confines of this city. It formerly belonged to another prince, but this fellow descended into Hell with a large following and carved out this petty kingdom for himself. It is known as Paris of the Revolution.’

“I saw quite plainly what was his real object. He feared to openly cross swords with me, yet felt that my constant presence near him, and yet independent of him, was a danger.

“He foresaw that by this means he would at any rate get me away from the heart of his empire for a time; and he, further, hoped that one of three things would result: either that I should be defeated and made a prisoner by Danton, or that the struggle would result in a draw, whereupon he could intervene and crush us both. Failing either of these, he still considered the third alternative advantageous. This was that I should crush Danton and seize his precarious

throne. In that case he believed that I should be fully engaged in retaining control over my new subjects, and so be unable to hurt him. He, on his part, would merely have exchanged one enemy for another, and might even find me so weakened by the conflict that he could attack and crush me easily.

“But though I saw his real intentions, yet it suited me to agree. I, too, feared open struggle with the Emperor. I knew only too well what failure would mean. On the other hand, I felt confident that I should be able to overthrow Danton, and, having added his adherents to mine, return and attack the Emperor with a far greater likelihood of success.

“ ‘I accept with alacrity your Majesty’s gracious offer,’ I cried.

“Thereupon the Emperor ordered a great feast to be prepared, and bade all the court attend.

“At this feast I was the honored guest.

“Wonderful dishes containing all manner of dainties were laid before us, but when we strove to eat them, feeling ravenously hungry and thirsty, there was nothing. The feast of Tantalus was no figment of the poet’s brain, but a grim reality.

“Yet though it was a hollow, sham, the wretched guests were compelled to pretend to enjoy the feast because the Emperor demanded it. He, however, scorning to keep up the pretence which he compelled others to maintain, sat there with a sardonic smile upon his features. I, too, refused to play the game, and watched with grim amusement the efforts of the others to appear gay.

“Everything was but a hollow pretence. There was a large orchestra playing during the feast, but, despite their efforts, they were quite unable to produce any real harmony. It was simply a horrible discord, made all the worse by the fact that the audience were compelled to pretend they enjoyed it.

“After the feast the tables were removed, and gladiators fought before the Emperor. After awhile, female gladiators took their places, and these fought with a ferocity and devilish cruelty which exceeded even that of the men.

“I will not give in detail all the amusements which graced the Emperor’s feast: it will serve no useful purpose. Enough to say that they included every imaginable form of cruelty and lust, and that many of them were perpetrated upon the guests themselves.

CHAPTER X

THE ATTACK ON DANTON

“Soon after we had left the feast, I sent out some of my retainers to issue a proclamation calling for volunteers. This brought in a considerable number, and, having mustered these, I commenced a route march through the city towards the district over which Danton was supreme.

“As we marched, thousands flocked to our standards, and at length, reaching an open space which looked like a piece of waste ground, such as one used to see in and near great cities, I halted them and began to divide them into squadrons and companies. Such a motley crowd, men of all ages and dimes, were gathered there: ancient Roman gladiators, Crusaders and robber barons of the Middle Ages, Chinese pirates, English buccaneers, soldiers of fortune from every corner of the earth, Turks, Bulgars — there they stood and yelled in wild excitement, shouting to be led against the enemy. At times they varied this by fighting among themselves.

“Gradually I sorted them into divisions, and placed these under officers. Thus I grouped the mediaeval knights into two huge masses and divided each mass into regiments and companies. Similarly, I organized the gladiators, the buccaneers, and,: indeed, all these various constituents, and produced in the end a very serviceable army. Its great fault was an almost utter lack of discipline, but this was replaced by the dominating will of the officers I had appointed. Of course, these were constantly conspiring against me, and I had to be always prepared to crush a mutiny first in one part of the army and then in the other.

“Nevertheless, my will being, as you know, a remarkably strong one, I was able to dominate and lead this large force numbering over a quarter of a million.

“We proceeded on our way, the troops acting, as they went, in the most approved style of the worst kind of soldiery — that is, they broke into the houses as they passed, plundering and ill-treating the inhabitants.

“One peculiar fact which I noticed was that they seemed unable to retain possession of what they had stolen. Once they had got it, it ceased to interest them and was thrown aside almost directly.

“When we reached the confines of the district held by Danton, I sent forward a scouting party, who soon returned, dragging several men with them.

“These wore the costume in vogue at the time of the Revolution, and from them I gathered a great deal of information. Of course, they tried to deceive

me, but as I could see their thoughts, it failed, as it always does here in the spirit world.

“These people are those who lived during the Revolution in France. Some of them were the supporters of Danton, others were his opponents.

Their chief amusement is the guillotine, but since the object of that was to produce a quick and comparatively painless death, they have slightly altered the procedure of an execution.

“Of course, there is no death in Hell, and their object is to inflict as much pain as possible. They therefore place the victim on a board and slide that board under the guillotine, the man’s feet, instead of his head, being in front and towards the crowd. The blade rises and falls a dozen times or more and cuts the victim in slices. The man suffers pain similar to that which he would have felt on earth, but the severed parts keep re-uniting. He thus suffers over and over again all the agonies of death, but without the helping hand of that great benefactor who, on earth puts some limit to the pain man can endure.

“How seldom is it that men realize how much more death is a friend than an enemy! How often have I longed for death again to come since that day on which he really came!

“The people in this district also re-enact, so far as they can, the chief episodes in the worst period of the Revolution. In particular, they hold blasphemous parodies of religious services, as they did then, and continually repeat the famous Festival of Reason, bowing down in mock solemnity before the original prostitute who on earth received their plaudits.

“Having obtained this and more information, I drew up my plan of campaign and then advanced into the enemy’s country. As we did so, we endeavored to do as much damage as possible to the houses and people we met. While we tortured and made slaves of the latter, we endeavored to utterly destroy the former. We were able to do this so long as we were near the ‘forms’ of the buildings, but as soon as we moved on to some other area and ceased to be interested, the buildings re-appeared.

“Like ourselves, they are ‘forms’ and so indestructible; they merely seem to disappear, because our wills are stronger than those of the owners, for the time being, but as soon as the stronger person’s will alters, or as soon as it ceases to think about them, they resume their original shape.

It is similar to the fact that the Emperor can compel people to assume the forms of animals. In like manner we compelled these forms to vanish, but as

soon as the will that had made them vanish was withdrawn, they resumed their normal shape.

“We thus advanced rapidly into the enemy’s country, and ere long saw the enemy’s forces mustered along a ridge. I should explain that there was some open country between the city in which the Emperor reigned and Paris of the Revolution. It was not really extensive, but was sufficient to act as a barrier between the two spheres of influence. It was created and retained by the determined will of Danton, or otherwise it would have soon been covered with houses.

It is utterly impossible to give you even approximate measurements, as space in your sense does not exist. However, it was large enough to enable two great armies to carry out all the complicated evolutions needed in a battle. The ground itself was the most dreary waste it is possible to imagine. It was black and burnt up, and, as it were, covered with ashes.

“There were two ranges of hills, and Danton had taken up his position on the further, while we occupied the ridge nearest to the Emperor’s city. Overhead, as it always is in Hell, the air was black and the atmosphere dense as with a fog. We were, however, by now able to perceive each other in spite of the fact that there was no light.

“I grouped my heavy guns in three main divisions.”

J. W. “Guns! Do you mean to say you have artillery in Hell? “

The Officer. “Certainly. Where do you suppose the ‘forms’ of all the weapons of destruction which men are for ever inventing go, if not to Hell? There is no place for them in the realm of Half-belief, and they must go somewhere. Well, they come to Hell.

Now, the really interesting feature about the matter lies in this. Men who on earth have never used rifles or, indeed, any modern weapons, are almost entirely unable to use them. These weapons are ‘forms’ and the pain which they inflict in Hell is mental. It appears very similar to physical pain, for that is the easiest way for us to appreciate it.

“A man who on earth knew nothing of the effects of a rifle wound would here find it next to impossible to imagine it. He could certainly not impose that kind of pain on another, and he would not be easily susceptible to it as imagined by another. A man who on earth has heard how a bullet hurts will be able to impose that type of suffering on another, or realize it when another tries to impose it on him. But the man who can both inflict and suffer most

keenly such pain is the man who has on earth actually undergone that particular kind of torment.

“Hence it comes about that often the most fiendish torturers here are those who were tortured on earth.

If they die unforgiving, they are enabled by the very pains they have suffered to retaliate on their old oppressors to a most appalling degree.

“Is this matter quite plain?”

J. W. “ Yes, I think so. A parallel case on earth is to be found in hypnotism. I gather that a hypnotist can make his patient suffer sensations and pains according as he wills it. He can make him taste a piece of lemon placed not in his own but in the hypnotist’s mouth. So, too, he can impose pain, especially pain associated with the nerves, and, contrariwise, can take away the pain which the patient is really feeling.”

The Officer. “Precisely, it is of course the same power, but it can only be used on the earth plane to a limited extent, because matter interferes. Still, by careful study and practice much more might be done on those lines than is. I should add, this power can be used both to help and to harm others. Many of the ceremonies of black magic are based on this principle. Thus, the wax doll with pins driven into the spot where the lungs should be was merely utilized as a means by which the magician could concentrate his mind on that of his enemy, and then cause him to suffer the same pain as he had pretended to inflict on the wax doll.

“It was, of course, easier to cause the pain by producing disturbances in the mental, or, at any rate, the nervous system. Still, there have been a few men of transcendent will power who were able to affect matter direct, for at its highest mind is, of course, more powerful than matter. Such cases are rare on the earth plane, but become more general on this plane.

“You will thus realize that each body of troops employed those weapons which were familiar to it, and in like manner, for the most part, those who knew nothing of shot and shell were unhurt by them. The latter rule was not so absolute as the former, for a few men of exceptional will power were able to inflict this type of pain of which they knew upon some of the weaker-willed among those who did not. They were, however, comparatively few.

“Now, though we had cannon we had no horses, for horses are animals each with a separate soul, and not forms only, like inanimate objects.

“That difficulty was partly surmounted by my compelling a large number of spirits to assume the form of horses, some to draw the cannon, others to act

as mounts for the cavalry. I was here copying the Emperor's methods, and found it a most useful move, as it did not occur to Danton. I believe, moreover, his will power was not sufficient to enforce such a command to any considerable extent. There are few things the spirits in Hell hate more than being obliged to lose, even temporarily, their original 'form.' To their materialistic minds it seems as if they are losing their identity."

CHAPTER XI

A BATTLE IN HELL

"Then the battle began in real earnest. Compared to it, the fighting in the arena had been the innocent make-believe of children. Nearly all these men had been used to fighting all their lives. The battle, to a casual observer, would have appeared much like a battle on earth, save for the curious blend of all kinds of weapons and costumes. The amour-clad knights charged again and again, and were met by solid phalanxes of Republicans armed for the most part with scythes.

"Danton was quite wily enough to know that against men who knew nothing of shot and shell these modern methods of destruction would be comparatively harmless. His scythe-armed rabble, on the other hand, would have been useless against our rifles, for most of them did know something of the pain which a bullet can inflict. Many, indeed, had been shot at various times, though the majority had fallen before the guillotine. Their scythes, on the other hand, were just the sort of weapon with which to meet horsemen.

"The Roman gladiators rushed forward in a solid phalanx to meet a regiment who charged up the hill with bayonets fixed. The enemy's artillery answered our own, but, being almost exclusively of the date of the Revolution, was not as effective as some of our guns. In this, indeed, was alike the strength and the weakness of Danton's army. It was much more coherent, and was kept together not merely by his dominating will, but by a sympathy of interests and history, and of course my force lacked these useful adjuncts. On the other hand, he was unable to employ any of the more modern weapons of destruction, while I could. So the battle raged for what seemed years.

"The plain between the two ranges was covered with what appeared to be wounded and dying men, and the screams of anguish rose even above the roar of the guns. I should add that the flame which leapt out every time a gun was fired was visible, but yet produced no light — that is, nothing which illuminated the surrounding darkness.

“But my forces not only outnumbered Danton’s, but, on the whole, exceeded them in ferocity; and at length I was able to force back his left wing and then drive him from his position into the plain. Here his army was caught between my triumphant right wing, now occupying their former position on the ridge, and the remainder of my army, which still held the range nearest the emperor’s city.

“Here they were completely shattered, and such as could attempted escape down the valley to our left, the other three sides being closed. This plan shows you the final position.”

He sketched out roughly, as it were with fire, the following plan.

Plan of the Battle. See end of book.

“The number of our prisoners was enormous, for very few succeeded in escaping to our left.

“My first act was to compel a large number of them to assume the shape of horses, and so release my own men. I did this not out of consideration for my own men, but because I thus was enabled to make it the interest of my men to concentrate their will on keeping them prisoners.

“We then hurled ourselves upon the town and stormed it. I should have told you that quite a considerable proportion of Danton’s army consisted of women, and these fought with even greater ferocity than the men. Consequently, when they fell into the hands of my victorious troops, the tortures they inflicted on these women beggar description.

“We, of course, sacked Paris of the Revolution as completely and thoroughly as it was possible for the most savage soldiery to do. We spared the inhabitants no suffering which could be devised. Yet, strange to say, whereas on earth there is some strange satisfaction to savage men in a sack, here there was none.

It was all a hollow sham. The goods we plundered were useless to us; the wine we tried to drink made no impression on our ghostly gullets; the whole thing was a fraud. There was not even the satisfaction one gets in a dream, when one appears to taste the food one eats, and so forth. Even in our dreams we are still in touch with our physical bodies, and so can supply the full and proper interpretation.

“In Hell, though we can still suffer pain, yet we cannot enjoy pleasure. That is the first great law in Hell, if I could use the word law in a place which is essentially the negation of all law.

“I then set to work to establish myself on my new throne. I was surprised to find, however, that I had lost a considerable number of Danton’s former subjects. I did not know it at the time, but I learnt afterwards that the overthrow of Danton had enabled some who had been growing weary of the sort of life they led to hope faintly for something better, and this once done, help was vouchsafed them to escape and begin the first steps towards progress.

“Thus out of the appalling nightmare of that battle arose the possibility of progress for a few. Such is often the case in Hell, showing how wonderfully out of evil God is able even there to bring forth good.

“Now I think you have heard enough, and this will form a convenient place at which to close my narrative for the time being.”

H. J. L. then spoke. “Yes, I think, Jack, it is time you were returning.”

Then I sank into unconsciousness. — J. W.

CHAPTER XII

A SECOND VISIT TO THE EMPEROR

H. J. L. had hardly ceased greeting me when the officer entered the room. He began almost at once:

“Having established myself in my kingdom, I soon began to realize the terrors of kingship. Never for a single moment could I feel at peace. Rest there was none. Ever I had to be on the watch to suppress some revolt or defeat some ingenious plot.

“I felt like a hunted animal at bay, surrounded by a lot of snapping curs who were only watching for their chance when I was off my guard. Every diabolical cruelty I could devise I employed to terrorize my enemies, but it was of no avail. I could not kill them, and the only effect of my tortures was that they hated me the more.

“After a while I received a message from the Emperor congratulating me on my success, and inviting me to visit him. To refuse would have been to acknowledge that I was afraid of the Emperor; at the same time, my absence from the kingdom would be the signal, I knew, for a revolt. However, I decided to risk the latter danger and go and laugh in the Emperor’s face.

So I set out with a considerable guard.

“I was received with much pomp and splendor, or at least so it appeared. Really, of course, the whole show was a hollow fraud. The bands which played

could only produce a discordant din; the tapestries which adorned the streets were dirty and tattered; the flowers which were strewed in my path were withered, and stank of rottenness; the pretty maids who preceded our procession were rendered hideous by the lines with which cruelty and lust had marked their faces.

“After meeting the Emperor’s procession, we went together to witness a gladiatorial show. This finished, we proceeded to the palace, and there a great feast took place. It was the same empty show as all the rest. There was nothing real except what was vile.

“ ‘And how do you like the cares of kingship?’ inquired the Emperor. ‘Uneasy lies the head, eh?’

“I laughed. ‘It’s better than being under your Majesty, anyway.’

“ ‘Very likely. Still, I fancy you must get a little bit tired of being ever on the watch. I know I do. When I want a change I take a spell on earth again. It’s wonderfully restful and refreshing after the strenuous life one has to lead here.’

“For once my curiosity was greater than my wisdom, and I cried, ‘But how do you manage to return to earth? I thought once we had lost our astral bodies..’

“ ‘You are still a young man’ he replied, ‘and have much to learn; but I am surprised you do not know that simple fact.’ He looked at me thoughtfully, and then continued: ‘If a spirit in Hell makes an alliance with a mortal on earth, it is possible for the former to acquire, or at any rate borrow, for a short time, a temporary astral body. At times it is even possible for such a spirit to obtain for a short time a material body.

“ ‘Such men used to be known as wizards, and the women as witches, and the spirits they invoked were always regarded as devils. Of course, many of them were elementals, and a few may have been devils proper, but most of them were just human spirits, and not always bad ones either.

“ ‘Of course it’s a risky business playing about with sorcerers. They always try to reduce the spirit in partnership with them to the position of their abject slave. Their wills, of course, are strong, and if the spirit be some rather weak, vicious fool, they can reduce him to a position of absolute subservience, at any rate for a time.’

“ ‘But how can they enforce their commands?’ I cried.

“ ‘By the same methods by which you and I enforce ours; by the mere force of their wills. Just as we can inflict any kind of pain we choose on our subjects, so can these wizards on their spirit slaves. But, of course, with iron wills such

as we have, the end always is that we can dominate the wizard and make him our slave. Then, indeed, for a short time we can have a glorious time.'

"He rose 'Let us now go and witness the play which is to be performed in the private theater and he referred no more to the subject of magic. But what had been said made a profound impression upon my mind. I was so struck with the idea that I failed to see the danger lurking in it. I have no doubt that the Emperor raised the subject with the object of luring me into this danger, but I did not perceive it.

"I have often wondered how it was that I did not perceive it. It may have been that the Emperor really had a stronger will than I, and so was able by a very strong exercise of that will to prevent me seeing what was passing in his innermost mind. It may have been, however, that I was so struck with the idea that I never strove to get to the bottom of it and find out what his real object was.

"Of course I did not imagine for one moment that he made the suggestion with any other object than that of doing me harm. I thought he foresaw that if I left my dominion to go playing tricks on the earth I should at once be deposed.

"This, indeed, I knew quite well would be the case, but I also felt certain I should find no difficulty in throwing out the usurper when I returned. In reality he knew this too; but he also knew that after a time the effect of this new sin would be to render it impossible for me to return even to that division of Hell. I should, in fact, be compelled to fall still lower. Thus he hoped to be rid of me.

"I did not know this, and, being anxious to try the new experience for several reasons, determined to do so. My reasons were, firstly, that I wanted some rest, or at any rate change, from ever standing on guard in Hell; secondly, it would be a new experience, and therefore of interest in itself; thirdly, the possibility of seeing the earth again filled me with a new sensation, which I can only compare with what a boy feels when he is homesick.

"I returned soon after to Paris of the Revolution, and of course found civil war in progress. One section had liberated Danton and placed him on the throne. I soon dealt with the matter, and Danton and the other ringleaders returned to the torture chambers."

CHAPTER XIII

‘THE OFFICER’AND THE WIZARD

“Then I set myself to find a man who, on earth, had been a sorcerer. I discovered a good many; more than I expected, but most of them had only played at the game. The reason, of course, was that those who had really obtained any considerable knowledge in the subject had, on death, fallen even lower in Hell than we were.

“I found one man, however, who had been associated with a far abler man who had fallen lower. The man in my dominion told me all he had learnt from the other, though he had not dared to practice it, and I soon discovered how to get in touch with a magician on earth.

“This ‘student of the occult’ was a German, and lived in Prague, or, rather, on the threshold of that city. He knew a lot about magic, and had already discovered how to ‘raise’ and control the spirits of the dead — in plain English; weak-willed spirits of the astral plane. He could also do something with the elementals. He was now working to raise ‘a real devil from Hell’ and it was I that answered his invocation.

I had set the old magician who was in Hell to work before me, in spite of his prayers, for he was afraid. As his incantations rose, they came in contact with those from the man on earth. This stream of incantation soon made itself plain to me, and I was thus informed that there was one on earth who wanted such as I.

“Voluntarily I stepped into the stream of invocation, and joined my will to theirs. At once I seemed to be drawn through space, and found myself before him.

‘The student of the occult,’ as he called himself, was standing in the middle of his magic circle, within which were two triangles forming a six-pointed star. All around it were pentagons and a whole host of other mystic signs. A brazier burnt in the room, and from it rose a heavy perfume which filled the room with smoke.

“The room itself was perfectly dark, and appeared to be a cellar with walls of stone, and floor of the same material. There were some cases with mummies along one side of the wall, and a few articles of furniture. But the larger part of the room was completely bare.

“Now, though I could see him, he as yet could not see me, and continued his incantations. I began to will that he should see me; and then I perceived lying outside the circle, and at some little distance from it, a woman. She was not

dead, but in a trance, and I knew at once why she was there. She was mediumistic, and from her I could build up for the time being a temporary habitation of some sort.

“I moved towards her, and began to draw from her the more etherealized elements, at the same time exerting my powerful will to the intent that he should see me. Soon he did so. I doubt if, as yet, an ordinary mortal would have been able to, but he was possessed of clairvoyance, though not in the highest degree.

“As I became visible to him, I perceived that I gave out a kind of lurid red light. It was not much like the brilliant red fire of the opera when Mephistopheles appears, but it is evidently from some such phenomena as I was now producing that the tradition had grown up. I am not quite sure of the reason, whether it was due to the predominance of hatred in my aura, or simply because the wizard expected me to come in that form, but at any rate, if he expected horns and a cloven hoof he did not get them. I could see that he was quaking with fear, but he pulled himself together and cried, ‘Come hither, slave, I command.’

“ ‘Slave be damned,’ I replied. ‘I’m no one’s slave, If you want my services you’ve got to pay for them.’

“This seemed to disconcert him a little. You see, it did not follow along the traditional lines of evoking evil spirits according to the ancient legends. As a matter of fact, stories of these sort of things emanated almost solely from the mouth of the magician and were doubtless colored accordingly.

“After a few moments he said, ‘What is it that you demand?’

“Now the correct answer, I suppose, should have been ‘Your immortal soul,’ but I didn’t care a two-penny cuss about his soul. So it was my turn to hesitate. At last I replied, ‘What have you to offer me’

“At once came the answer, ‘My soul.’

“ ‘That’s no use to me, and in any case it’s damned already. No, I want something which will benefit me personally.’

“ ‘Well, what if I give you a mortal body so that you walk this earth in the semblance of a man?’

“ ‘Can you do this, for I have not an astral body?’ I inquired.

“ ‘Nevertheless I can manufacture one for you and so enable you to obtain control of a physical one.’

“And he spoke the truth, for by his knowledge of the occult he was able to draw round him a host of empty astral shells and of the lighter elementals. Seizing on one of the latter, I molded it into a semblance of my former self and found I had an astral body. Then, going over to the medium, I with his assistance built up a real material body.

“I gave a shout of delight. After all that nightmare of horror I was back on earth again. But even as I did so, I felt that it was but a temporary release.

“ ‘Can I go outside?’ I inquired.

“ ‘I doubt it,’ he replied. ‘still, you can try.’

“I climbed up the stone stairs and came out into the broad daylight. The effect was magical as well as unpleasant. I seemed to dissolve — or at least my physical covering did.

“I hurried down into the cellar, and we had to start the materializing again.

“ ‘Well,’ I said, ‘a body which melts in the sun is not much good. You’ll have to do something better than that.’

“ ‘You can always’ he whispered, ‘take control of someone, and with care this materialized kind of body will enable you to get about in the dark.’

“In return for this, I agreed to help the magician in his plans.”

CHAPTER XIV

THE EVIL THAT THEY WROUGHT

“Gold, power, and revenge were the chief things he desired. At the same time he did not despise lesser advantages. He had about a dozen women over whom he had acquired absolute control, and who were all mediumistic. These he used to help him materialize spirits and produce other phenomena.

“I helped him to acquire much gold. It was a simple process. I could pass through matter in my astral form and dematerialize some of the gold, carry

it out into a place of safety, and there it would take up again the material elements, which for a time had been scattered. This process needed expenditure of considerable will power, and an easier method was for me to take control of some denizens of the house in which the gold lay when asleep or in a trance. These would collect as much as they could carry and convey it to some place arranged by the magician and myself. Then they would return, and would have no recollection of what had happened next morning when they awoke.

“Once or twice they were followed and arrested, but though they were punished for theft, no suspicion fell on ‘the student of the occult.’ Of course, when arrested, I cleared out and left the unfortunate spirit to re-enter his body and shoulder the responsibility.

“I was just as useful to my master in carrying out his schemes of revenge, for he had many enemies. He had a particular dislike of all forms of religion, and vented it upon the clergy whenever he got an opportunity.

“At first he contented himself with slight damage. Tricks were played on his victims by elementals. Things were thrown about the room, crockery was smashed; when asleep his victim was awakened by having the clothes pulled off the bed, his face smacked, and his nose tweaked. But as time wore on and he found that he could do these things with impunity, his vicious character developed. Pinching and teasing gave place to physical violence. His victims were beaten black and blue or thrown downstairs, and attempts were made to set the house on fire.

“As the phenomena became more and more malevolent, the elementals for the most part dropped out, and even the spirits of the dead who had served him began to resist. They did not dare openly to defy him, for he had methods of making even them suffer, but they did the work half-heartedly and badly.”

J. W. “But how did he make the spirits suffer? “

“By his will. He, as it were, hypnotized them. This batch were weak-willed folk whom he compelled to do what he liked. He made them suffer, if they resisted, just as we make each other suffer in Hell.

He found, however, that though I could not be threatened and bullied, yet I was far more willing than they to inflict suffering upon men.

“Meanwhile I had not neglected my own interests. Besides settling a few old scores and even partaking again, when materialized or controlling, of some of earth’s former pleasures, I had also been building up my influence over my master. Some of the scenes in that old cellar under his house would have filled you with amazement. There would be at least a dozen of his girl mediums, some normal, others in trance, and in addition sometimes as many as a dozen materialized spirits. Except myself, these spirits came from the astral plane, and were constantly changing as one after another hurled themselves out of their astral bodies through one or more of the occult sins. These materialized spirits would stand or sit and talk and even laugh and sing and dance. Nor were these innocent recreations all; but I will draw a veil.

“Sometimes in the best vein of medievalism the wizard would celebrate the black mass, and we were the congregation.

“Meanwhile, however, I found it necessary constantly to renew my astral body. The mere fact that it was not really my own rendered it fragile and liable to disintegrate; and, further, the evil I was constantly doing hastened the dissolution. The result was that, despite obsessing many people, I was constantly requiring new astral bodies.

“At length my master called upon me to murder a man who had somehow got on the track of some of his deeds. I followed him to his house unseen, and between one and two in the morning set to work. Standing at the foot of his bed, I willed, and as I did so became visible in my astral body. The dull red glow which always seemed to accompany me shed no illumination beyond making me visible.

“I willed still harder, and the wretched man saw all around him a host of evil shapes, bloated monsters, elementals of every form and kind, while besides these were the malevolent faces of evil men and women. They shrieked ‘Death to the traitor; tear him to pieces’ and almost every moment they rushed at him as if about to carry out their threats. They were unable to do so, for it is very difficult for a non-physical being to hurt the body of a mortal unless he has done something to put it in their power. But this wretched victim did not know that, and he was in an agony of terror.

“Then I cried aloud, ‘Have you forgotten Anna? We are here to avenge her. She is now in Hell, and has sent us to bring you there also.’ (As a matter of fact she had not sent us, and we did not know whether she was in Hell or not.)

“He screamed; ‘My God, after all these years must that sin rise up and condemn me.’

“We laughed derisively and went on in chorus, ‘She calls, she calls. Come away, come away!’

“We rushed at him again and again; we cursed him and jeered at him; and so all night long till morning broke we tormented him. The next night it was the same, and again on the third night. And all the while I kept urging him on: ‘Better death; kill yourself; there is no hope. You are going mad. Better kill yourself before you go mad and kill someone else!’

“ ‘Oh, Anna, can you not forgive me? I was but a young man and did not realize all it meant.’

“Then one of the spirits assumed the shape, of Anna, and, standing at the foot of the bed, cursed him, until, driven desperate, he sprang out of bed and, seizing a razor, cut his throat. —

“My master was delighted by the success of these operations, and I urged him on to attempt something similar against a young priest whom he hated. This man had denounced him as being in league with the Devil, which was largely true, and therefore angered my master the more.

“We plagued him, but though we caused him much annoyance by disturbing his sleep and so forth, we failed to hurt him much. Then I inspired one of the prettiest village maids to fall desperately in love with him. She followed him about for weeks, and finally threw herself on her knees in the church, while pretending to confess, and begged for his love. This refused, I turned her love to anger, and she spread all sorts of ugly rumors concerning him.

“Then we attacked him again more fiercely. We scoffed at his religion and told him it was false, or else the good God would not allow us to come to him. We told him he was about to be disgraced, and we urged him to escape the consequences of his evil life by suicide.

“(The poor devil had had a remarkably innocent life, as a matter of fact, and was not quite such a fool as not to know it.)

“We persecuted him like this for weeks until, at length one night he cried, ‘I believe you are sent by that wretched old man whom I denounced as in league with the Devil. I’ll go and tell him what I think of him now!’

“At once we urged him to do so, for, once there, it would be strange if our master could not finish him off. Seizing a crucifix, he stepped out into the darkness, and we followed him, jeering and threatening him.

“It was a wild night, a fit setting to the tragedy. The wind howled and the rain beat in his face. Overhead the lightning flashed and the thunder roared. I shrieked in his ear, ‘Hark to the voice of God denouncing you! You hypocrite, look at His lightning threatening to blast you! See how the whole face of heaven is black against you! Accursed of God and man, soon will you come to us in Hell.’

“At length he reached the door of my master’s house and knocked. It was opened, and he found himself in a dark passage. No one spoke, and he stumbled forward seeking a door. The first one he reached was locked, and so was the second; for some of us had gone forward to warn the magician. But a door at the end was not fastened.

“He opened this, and, entering, found the magician waiting for him in a dimly lighted study. The priest denounced him fiercely, but the magician answered not a word, but gazed fixedly at him till his denunciation died slowly away, and he stood there silent, a disheveled figure, with a hunted look upon his face.

“At length my master spoke; ‘You fool, what made you come here? Your doom is sealed.’

“He began to chant an invocation, and as he did so we gathered round and recommenced our work of persecuting the poor wretch.

“Again the master spoke: ‘Tomorrow you will be denounced before the whole, of your congregation. I have two women here who will bear witness that you seduced them and were in the habit of visiting them here. I caught you tonight, and it is because I have suspected you for some time and done my best to frustrate your evil designs that you have denounced me as in league with the Evil One.’

“ ‘It is false,’ he shrieked, ‘and you know it. I will deny it and tell the whole world of the evil spirits who obey your commands.’

“ ‘And who will believe you? If they don’t consider the story a lie, they will declare it is due to drink or madness. No, my fine fellow, you’re done for; and it will be a nasty blow for religion too.’

“While he was speaking he threw a heavy weight at the priest, which felled him to the ground.

“ ‘Don’t kill him yet!’ I urged. ‘Wait till he has been thoroughly discredited.’

“ ‘Not I! he replied. ‘I only intend to obtain some evidence of his guilt — a few trinkets which the two women can produce as evidence. A lock or two of his hair, to begin with; this handkerchief and this seal from his watch chain.’

“ ‘Can’t we get him to commit some sin? ‘I urged.

“My master jumped at the idea, but, almost at the same moment, we were overwhelmed with a flood of light. It seemed to burn and scorch me, and its whiteness was so intense that no words of mine can describe it. This light came from a gigantic spirit of commanding and awful presence, his guardian angel. He spoke, and his words rang out like a trumpet:

“No man may be tempted beyond that which he is able to resist. Ye have been permitted to tempt and persecute this man that he might come forth from the temptation strengthened by it; but your work is finished. The cup of your iniquities is filled to the brim. Go down to the depth of Hell; and go thither

also, thou spirit from Hell; return to a place even lower than that from which thou camest.'

"As he spoke the fire seemed to burn me through and through, and the magician fell dead. His spirit rapidly separated from its body, and then the astral body, exposed to that terrible light, shivered and shattered and fell away. The naked spirit fell with an agonized shriek, and vanished from my sight. At the same instant I felt myself whirling through space down into utter darkness.

"But when I realized I was in Hell, I was not back in my old kingdom or in the City of Hate. I had sunk still lower, and had almost reached the bottom division of Hell. But of what befell me there I will tell you at another time."

J. W. "Before I go, can you explain why you appeared red when you came back to earth?"

H. J. L. interrupted. "I think it was not only because the sorcerer expected to see him like that, but more because his aura was full of the red rays which represent anger and hate. As you know, our auras change color with the passion that dominates us at the time."

J. W. " Your story, officer, grows more and more extraordinary as it proceeds. I doubt whether that part about the magician will be believed, though I know you are telling the truth. You see, magic has fallen into such disrepute, hardly anyone believes in it now."

The Officer. "I don't care a damn whether they believe it or not. It is true, and only by relating it can I explain what next befell me. I should not have sunk lower if it had not been for that adventure."

H.J. L. " Good-bye, Jack. You must be off now,"

Next moment I lost consciousness. — J. W. ,

CHAPTER XV

HIS PUNISHMENT. THE SECOND DIVISION. REAL DEVILS

TRANCE VISION, May 18th 1914.

The Officer resumed his narrative.

"As soon as I realized my position, I began to hunt about, and was not long in discovering that, bad as the division above had been, this was worse. The darkness seemed more intense and the place seemed very empty. But this latter was not for long.

"I heard wild yells of despair, shrieks, and screams, and out of the darkness burst a herd of spirits, and behind them I saw for the first time the real spirits of evil, of which the devils usually described are but shadows.

"I had seen those 'shadows' occasionally on the astral plane. They were the figures formed by the imagination of those who had believed in them; but these were something different. They had not bat's wings, cloven hoofs, or horned heads, as usually depicted, though the devils formed by the imagination of men and found on the astral plane had them. These spirits, who had never been men, were some of the most appalling creatures it is possible to imagine.

"They were driving the herd of spirits before them, lashing at them with what were apparently whips. As they struck they cried out, 'How like you, your Master, the Devil?'

"Then they shouted the most fearful blasphemies, and screamed, 'Blaspheme, you swine, blaspheme!

We are the real gods; the things you call gods are but figments of your brains.'

"Even as they were shouting this they reached me, and one struck me across the face. Acting on the principle I had always followed, I turned upon him savagely, but this time it was no use. Again and again I was struck, and knew that at length I had found my master. I fell writhing to the ground beneath these savage blows, but at once someone plunged what appeared to be a goad into me, and I sprang up with a yell and rushed madly forward with the rest of the herd.

"Now began a period of awful terror. On and on we were hunted through these great dark spaces, without stay or intermission, till I began to feel as if all that was really I was being hammered out of me. We could not speak to each other; we simply stumbled and fell, got up again, ran on, heedless of

each and all. There were men and women here side by side. Most wore clothes, though a few were stark naked. The clothes were of all ages and countries, and were mostly torn and ragged.

“We were able to perceive each other in the murky air, but we could not see the country through which we ran. We ran out of the darkness into the darkness, knowing nothing, caring nothing, if we could but escape from the whips of our masters. And behind us rose that wild chorus ‘How like you, your master? Our burden is heavy, our reward small. On, on forever. There is no hope for you. You are damned for ever. This is the unpardonable sin, for you have worshipped the Devil instead of God.

“ ‘No, there is no God. Men do but beguile themselves when they say there is a God. There is no such thing as Good except as the opposite of Evil. Evil really exists, Good does not. There is no such thing as a good man. Christ is a myth. We are the only beings who are real. Despair! Weep! Your good days are over. It were better for you if there had been no such thing as life after death. We served you in the world, now you must serve us in turn.’

“These and constant other taunts and jeers greeted our ears the whole time. Most of what they said was lies, said to reduce us to utter despair, and the more dangerous because there was a certain modicum of truth in it.

“I soon found that I was quite unable to read what was in their minds, as I had been able to do with the men in the division above. They seemed, by the mere exercise of their wills, to be able to build up a wall round their thoughts which I was quite powerless to penetrate.

“At length I cried to one of the devils, ‘Is there no way by which I can become one of the drivers instead of one of the driven?’

“Yes,’ he cried, as he lashed me in the face, ‘yes; if you will go back to the division above and bring down a hundred spirits. It can easily be done. Make them believe in the devils and worship them. Have the Black Mass, and this will soon hurl them down!’

“ ‘How can I return to that division?’ I inquired.

“ ‘One of us will quickly show you the way; but think not that you will be able to escape us when there. No, we allow you to go to do our work, and we shall know at once if you try to escape us.’”

CHAPTER XVI

HE UNDERTAKES TO RECRUIT FOR THE DEVILS

“I was allowed to stop behind while the rest whirled on along their never-ceasing path.

“I looked at this malevolent being who had been deputed to guide me. He was far larger than I, and seemed made of darkness, if you can understand me.

Never for two minutes did he look the same; not merely his face, but his whole form seemed to be constantly changing. He was robed in a long flowing robe of black; but even while I looked he became stark naked. Then he changed, and became like a goat, and even while I was struggling with my amazement he became a python.

“He next resumed his man’s shape — man’s, did I say? No; no man, however vile, looked as diabolical as this creature did. The face was hideous in the extreme; the eyes were oblong and glittered like a snake’s, the nose was hooked like an eagle’s beak, the mouth was full and armed with teeth which were pointed and almost like tusks. Malevolence and debauchery seemed stamped on his features, — while his hands were almost like talons, they looked so bony. From his body darkness seemed to ooze. Again he changed and became a column of red flame, which yet gave no light, and from this awful flame came a *voice*, ‘Follow this way.’

“We moved along thus, I and the moving column of flame. Presently out of the gloom I heard the sounds as of discordant chanting, and soon I saw what appeared to be a mountain, and, on approaching nearer, saw there was a cave, and in it many spirits. My guide assumed his semi-human form, and we entered the cave together.

“Here we heard the dang of cymbals and the blare of trumpets, and, the mingling with them of shrieks and cries as well as of discordant singing. Soon we saw a great throne, and in front of it a huge cauldron of what seemed like fire blazed and roared. On the throne was seated a hideous monster, and into the cauldron they were flinging little boys and girls, who screamed as if they were really burning. Of course it felt like burning, you know.

“ ‘Are those really children?’ I inquired.

“ ‘No,’ he answered; ‘they are men and women whom the stronger-willed have compelled to assume that form, and then offer up in sacrifice. Every now and then some of the real devils raid the place and throw the whole lot into the furnace. No young children come here. Here are the devils!’

“As he spoke a wild shriek arose from the worshippers, and a band of evil spirits rushed into the temple and drove us all, save my guide, into the great cauldron.

“What it was that burnt, whether it was the will of the evil spirits, I don’t know, but I suffered awful agonies.

“At length the evil spirits disappeared as swiftly as they had come, and we crawled out. The rest resumed their service, and I made my way towards my guide.

“He grinned ferociously and said, ‘Truly my yoke is heavy, is it not? It will be still more so unless you bring us a fine batch of worshippers’

“ ‘I will, I will,’ I screamed. ‘But why do you want more worshippers? You only torture us when you have us.’

“ ‘Because we hate you; we hate you with an intensity of which your feeble brains have no comprehension. You think you know how to hate, but it is but a feeble imitation of that which is almost our life to us. We hate you.’

“As he screamed these words he seemed to burst into a raging fire, and it was some time before he resumed his human shape.

“ ‘Now to your work,’ he cried, and moved swiftly along for some time. Presently we seemed to be climbing, but whether we really did, who can say?

“Suddenly he seized me and sprang with me into space, and next thing I realized was that I was back in the division above. I at once perceived that it was not in the City of Hate that I had been placed.

“My evil guardian cried, “Now remember, you cannot stay here for long. Your body has become too gross even for this division of Hell, and any treachery on your part will be at once punished by the most awful torments. Moreover, I shall immediately fetch you back. I cannot stay here in any comfort but I shall know what you are doing and thinking, so beware!’

“He had gone! With what a sigh of relief I realized it, but I foresaw that any respite would be but short. However, a brilliant idea struck me. If I succeeded in bringing back a good batch It was likely that I should be sent out again, therefore I would try.

“I found that I was in the miser’s country, and the great terror which haunted them was the fear that someone would rob them of their gold. Of course they had no gold, and if they had, it would not have been of the slightest use. But still their old instincts of fear and greed were still all-powerful.

“I soon found that I could work these vices to my advantage. To some I promised that if they would worship the devil he would give them as much gold as they wanted; to the others I promised protection from the tyranny of the rest and the fear of losing all they had. By dint of much hard work I collected a nice little band, who, under my instructions, performed the Black Mass.

“At first the evil spirits seemed to pay but little heed to us, but, after a time, one or two of them appeared. At length, at one of the services, I noticed a sensation of being dragged, and so did all the congregation. I knew at once what it meant, though the others did not. It meant that the spiritual connection had been formed, and we were about to fall to our own place. The feeling of attraction, almost akin to the law of gravity, grew stronger and stronger, and at length we seemed to be falling. The surroundings slipped away past us, the solid ground appeared to give way, and we fell. We had indeed become too gross for even the spiritual elements of Hate to hold us, and the attraction of what we had made our god drew us towards it.”

CHAPTER XVII

HE FALLS INTO THE LOWEST DEPTH OF HELL

“As soon as we reached the land of those accursed devils we were surrounded by them on every side. I looked now for my promised reward, but instead heard this from one of them:

“ ‘You have acted the part of a devil and lured men to destruction, but without even the excuse that we have. We are of a different order to men and hate them, but you are of their order and have not the excuse, of hating them. You have betrayed your fellow-men simply for your own selfish ends. It matters nothing to us, but if you imagine you can change a man into a devil simply by aping one, you are a fool as well as a knave. Our nature and yours is different. Back with the others, you cur.’

“I slunk back among my victims, but only for an instant, for they, furious at my treachery, which, of course, they divined, instinctively hurled themselves upon me, and tried to tear me to pieces. Then succeeded a wild nightmare, in which the demons lashed us forward, and my victims strove to tear me to pieces. I suffered the same anguish as if they had succeeded, but still lived on to suffer again and again. At length I shook myself free and fled, and they pursued. What really happened next I cannot truly describe or even remember. Like some frightful nightmare I ran on and on, and, after a time, I appeared to be leaping and falling downwards. At length all deliberate motion

on my part ceased, yet still I fell-down, down, down, and it seemed as if I should never reach the bottom.

“After an interminable age my downward course was stayed. I appeared to be completely immersed in some spongy mass; it was neither firm ground nor water nor even marsh. It was something which has no real counterpart on earth. It was the most tangible form of darkness I met with in all Hell. Of course all the darkness of Hell is tangible to spirits from even this plane.

“This spongy fog gradually stopped my downward passage, but I felt no firm ground beneath my feet. The same spongy mass was above and below and around, as solid above my head as below my feet. There was no sound, no sight, nothing, absolute nothingness, solitude intolerable, black despair, misery unspeakable. I felt myself at last an utter outcast; yes, indeed an outcast, cast forth alike from the society of men and devils. This was the end of all my desperate striving against Fate.

“Oh, that ghastly silence! Utter, absolute solitude!”

He ceased.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE BOTTOMLESS PIT

LETTER FROM ‘The Officer’, May 23rd

“How can I convey to you the awful solitude of the lowest depth of Hell? No words of mine can ever make you realize it. Nothing else could ever have broken my proud spirit as that did. Absolutely abandoned, forsaken, alone! neither sight nor sound, not another soul, alone, absolutely alone — with one’s own thoughts. They rose before me and gibed and jeered, all the evil that I had ever done.

“I did not repent then, I did not even feel remorse, but I felt a wild, hopeless despair. These thoughts seemed to take form and shriek at me ‘You are damned. Look at us. We are the things which you have begotten. What right have you for hope? All your life has been given up to evil, till not even the most abandoned will associate with you. We cannot forsake you; we would if we could.’

“Then again came darkness; it seemed almost like annihilation I opened my mouth to scream, but no sound came out. The darkness seemed to flow in and stop it. *Their mouths shall be stopped with dust.* I seemed vaguely to remember the phrase, but where it came from I did not care. Oh, that awful

loneliness I would have done anything to get back even to the whips of the evil spirits above, but it was not to be.

“Absolutely crushing silence. I cannot convey to you the awfulness of that solitude. You may think that the pains of the divisions above were worse, but it was not so.

“Ages seemed to pass, and those terrible words came ringing in my mind, ‘*Damned eternally*’ then again Dante’s words, ‘*Abandon hope, all ye who enter here*’.

“Yes, all hope. I felt it, and so for what seemed endless ages, I suffered in solitude. Suddenly a phrase came into my mind, and I grasped its full meaning:

“ ‘*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?*’

“He who hung upon the cross knew intuitively its awfulness and the despair of those who lay here. *Forsaken of God* : Never till now had I understood the meaning of that sentence. It had seemed to me absurd, but now I saw as by a lightning flash He knew the sufferings of all, even those in the bottommost pit. Think what you please of the story of the Crucifixion, I care not, but this I do know — that He knew of our sufferings and realized it, and He alone of all who trod this earth knew it while on it.

“As this thought sank in I did not at first attach any particular meaning to it, but as time wore on, it came to me that there must be some significance in it. If He intuitively knew our sufferings, He who was All-Merciful must feel some shreds of pity for us. Doubtless He could not help us. *As a tree falls, so shall it lie.* Still, if He still lived anywhere and if I did, surely He would, He must feel pity for me.

“A new sensation grew by degrees. Why had I been such a fool?! Why had I not tried by repentance to get out of Hell? But there, what was the use?

I was in Hell and I could not, for Hell is eternal. But I thought and thought. At any rate it was pleasanter to think of Christ than of other things. Why not go on thinking of Him? I cannot say that I felt any genuine regret for my past life, but I began to feel that I had been a fool, I had wasted my chances.

“Well,’ I cried, ‘I must pay the price. I shan’t whine now; I never did on earth, and I’m not going to start now’; but somehow that scene on Calvary seemed to haunt me. It came as a refreshing interlude amid my other thought pictures. Then there came a new thought. I remembered my mother; I wondered where she was. She died when I was quite young, but I remembered her, and could remember how she used to teach me to pray. What was it? I could not

remember. Funny I could remember everything else, but not those prayers. Strange! Well, I'd always heard that the damned could not pray, and I was damned.

"I did not realize it, but in a feeble sort of way I was praying, or at least yearning, after better things.

"This was the turning point. How I got out I will tell you later, but this was the first faint beginning.

"Now I will break off. I wanted to leave you with the tense of hope, not of hopelessness, for though I did not realize it, this was the beginning of better things. I had at last reached the bottom, and soon I would start on the upward path. I had gone the full coarse and had reached the lowest depths, and yet, *His mighty arm was strong to save.* Glory be to God on high. Indeed, there is no such thing as death, neither of the good nor bad; but perpetual Hell would be death, for it means permanent separation from God. — THE OFFICER."

Witnessed by K.,

May 23rd, 1914.

Chapter XIX

THE FIRST UPWARD STEP

TRANCE VISION, May 25th, 1914.

The Officer having sat down began at once:

"How long I remained in that awful solitude I have no idea, but it seemed like centuries. Anyway, at length an inspiration came to me, sent, I believe, from above in answer to my inarticulate prayers. It was, 'Turn towards God. He can help you, and no one else can!

"*Turn towards God*. It was a new idea. My whole life had consisted in turning deliberately away from Him. How could I turn towards Him even now? Yet what would I not do to get out of this awful place?

"Again and again my mind reverted to the idea, but how could I go towards Him? How could I get out of this awful spongy darkness? Besides, I was damned.

"Another idea flashed into my mind. Why not pray? I tried the Lord's Prayer, but could not manage it. I had forgotten how to pray.

"At length, like an inspiration, the words suddenly burst from my lips, 'O God, help me!'

“Once spoken they came easier, and I repeated them again and again.

“What followed next, and, indeed, the whole of my process of getting out of this deepest depth, will, I am afraid, be very difficult for you to understand. It is next to impossible to find words adequate to describe these experiences.

“Well, the first effect of this praying was to produce what seemed like a pleasant sensation of warmth, and this warmth grew and grew until it became far too hot. Finally, I seemed to be afire. The more I prayed the more intense grew the heat, till at length I ceased to pray, hoping it might stay the pain. But it still continued.

“Then I became aware of a new sensation. I seemed to be growing lighter, and gradually I realized that I was slowly rising up through the spongy darkness.

“What had happened was, that by praying even so feebly I had begun to burn away a little of the grossest part of my nature which had rendered my spiritual body so heavy. Thus it became too light to remain stuck in that darkness, and gradually rose and rose, till at last I saw jutting out from the darkness what seemed like a black and slippery rock at the edge of some beetling cliffs. Though this phrase would not be adequate, yet if you consider this lowest depth as a deep lake of utter darkness with forbidding cliffs all around, you will get some idea.

“As soon as I saw this black, slippery rock I tried to climb on to it, but slipped off again and again. By this time the burning sensation had ceased, and, encouraged by the evidence I had just received of the benefits of prayer I tried it again.

“ ‘O God, help me to get out of this darkness.’

“I had hardly done so when the lake of darkness (*upon* which I was now floating instead of in it) became agitated. Great waves rose up round me, and seemed as if they would engulf me. Instead, however, I was lifted up and hurled on to the rock. It was as if the dark waters would no longer contain me on their bosom, and therefore cast me ashore.

“I have little doubt that in part this was the case. You see, bad as I still was, I was yet too good to remain there now, and so was cast up on the shore of the second lowest division.

“The darkness was still intense, but not so tangible; but when I commenced to investigate my surroundings, I must admit my heart sank. The rock seemed to jut out like a table from a high cliff, and at first I could find no path by which to climb it. Remembering how useful prayer had been before, I again assayed its benefits.

“For some time nothing happened, and I began to lose heart; but at length my sight seemed to become clearer, for I was able to detect a hole in the cliff a short distance to the left of the flat rock. I found that I could just reach it with one hand, and having tried many parts of the cliff with my foot, at length found a sort of step or hole broken or cut in the cliff, into which I placed my foot. After several more desperate struggles I reached the cave’s entrance, and on climbing into it found that, after running some distance inland, it opened into a kind of narrow gully.

“Now I’m afraid that all this must sound fearfully physical, but you must bear in mind that to us super-physical beings super-physical rock seems almost physical, and, in any case, when describing it to you we cannot convey the finer distinctions for which there are no words or symbols. This fact must be fairly intelligible to you, for look how natural in many ways is this spirit world to which you are permitted to come!

“By means of infinite toil and effort I was able slowly to climb up this gully, and after a while reached a spot some way up the cliff. Here I found a ledge of rock which ran along the side of the cliff for some distance, and followed it.

“In due course this, too, ended, and I almost gave way to despair. Had I struggled so far only to fail at last? I crouched down and thought, but as I could discover no way out, I began to pray again, but without much hope. However, the mere action of praying seemed to soothe my troubled spirit, and at length, encouraged by it, I rose and again searched for a way out.

“Suddenly there was a roar like thunder, and a mass of rock fell forward from the face of the cliff and jammed across the narrow gully close by where the path had broken off. This made a steep, sloping bridge. I could not see from where I stood whether the further end of the bridge led on to another path or ledge, but I felt sure that it had fallen in answer to my prayers. With infinite pains I scrambled on to this rough bridge. Several times I feared that I should pitch into the chasm below, but still I struggled on.

“At length I reached the top of the sloping stone bridge, and found that the chasm wall on the other side was more like screes than a sheer precipice. Up this I painfully struggled, often slipping back, but still persevering. My iron will stood me in good stead in this predicament.

“At length it was done, and I crawled on to comparatively level ground, rough and bouldery though it was, with a sigh of relief. I was back once more in the second division of Hell. At the same time a new fear seized me. Should I again see those devils?

“But nothing happened, no one came, and in time a new terror presented itself to my mind. Had I, after all, not left the lowest depth, was I still in that awful solitude? For a moment despair gripped me. Were all these painful efforts in vain? Were the apparent answers to my prayers a mockery, the scorn of an angry God who would never be appeased?

“But soon other thoughts came. The darkness, though still here, was not the same, it was not tangible, it was the darkness of the second division. So again came hope.

“Now you must leave us.”

CHAPTER XX

BACK IN THE SECOND DIVISION

VISION, The Officer's Narrative, June 1st, 1914.

After greeting me, the officer proceeded at once with his narrative.

“I scrambled painfully over the stony ground without any particular object in view save to get away from the crevasse up which I had crawled. This journey continued for some time, until in the distance I heard a fault sound and made towards it. Presently I began to recognize the noise. It was the screams of the unfortunate beings flying before the whips of the devils.

“I stopped. What should I do? I had no wish to suffer again that torment, and yet I dreaded solitude. However, I was not left long in doubt, for suddenly a herd of spirits came rushing out of the darkness pursued by their tormentors. Next moment I was caught by the crowd and had to rush with them.

“After being hunted for some time, I began to wonder whether I could not discover some method of escaping from these terrible whips.

“By my side was running a man, and at length I said to him as we stumbled along, ‘Look here, can’t we get out of this.’

“ ‘I would to God we could,’ he moaned.

“ ‘Who’s that using the name of God here? Take that, and that,’ screamed one of our tormentors, and at each word his fearful whip lashed us both.

“As we still ran on I noticed that the ground seemed not merely rougher, but beyond this rough ground lay high cliffs with clefts and gullies in which we might hide. So we began to edge our way to that side of the herd. Presently I murmured to my companion, ‘Now.’

“We raced for the shelter of the rocks, but at once one of the devils started in pursuit. It was a wild, desperate race, but of course we were recaptured.

However, I shouted to my companion, ‘Call on God to help us; I find that even here He can.’

“Then suiting my actions to my words I cried, ‘O God, help us; help us, for Christ’s sake.’

“ ‘Silence!’ yelled our captor. ‘God cannot help you here. He is just. You have rejected Him, and now He rejects you. Silence! You cannot pray. If you try, He will not hear. He has other things to do than listen to traitors like you. Are there not enough souls not yet damned who need His aid that He should hearken to you? Back to the others.

“Again and again the terrible whip lashed our bodies. But still I prayed on. Soon, however, my companion lost heart and rushed back to the crowd, hoping amid the others to be partly protected from the blows of the lash.

“Almost at the same moment I perceived that a little nearer the cliffs was a black, shiny pool unutterably filthy. Without an instant’s hesitation I plunged straight in.

“Whatever the substance was, it certainly was not the same tangible darkness I had experienced before in the division below; it much more resembled filthy water, thick and greasy with slime and dirt. I endeavored to swim across this, still for a while pursued by my tormentor, who lashed at me if ever I rose above the surface. Still calling upon God for help, I struggled on, and at length reached the further shore.

“At the foot of a high precipice I crouched and prayed desperately. Almost at once I saw a thin cord hanging round my waist. On looking closer I perceived it was a chain with many links, and as I studied them I knew they were the few good deeds I had ever done. I had never noticed them before, but now, few as they were, they seemed to give me courage.

“An idea came floating into my mind, and even as it did so I again felt the lash of the pursuer. However, I paid no heed to it, but quickly unwound the chain, which I discovered was woefully thin, but at the same time much longer than I had expected.

“I formed one end into a noose, and studied the face of the cliff in spite of the blows which were continually being rained upon me. I soon perceived a horn of rock, as it were, which jutted out, and above it appeared to be a narrow ledge.

“After several efforts I succeeded in catching the noose over this horn and then began to climb up the chain, hand over hand. Every moment I feared it would break, but I kept on praying desperately, and it seemed as if the chain grew stouter as I did so.

For a while the devil behind still lashed and struck, but after a time I appeared to climb out of his reach, and at length I scrambled on to the ledge, but I could see nothing because of the awful darkness. I looked next for the chain, but this too had vanished.

“For a time I gave myself up to despair; but after a while wiser thoughts prevailed, and instead of despairing, I knelt down and thanked God that He had helped me so far.

“Feeling calmer, I proceeded slowly on my way. The ledge was but narrow, and a false step would have meant a fall clean over the edge of the cliff.

“By degrees it grew a little broader, and soon I was able to walk along in comparative ease. ‘Well, I thought, it just shows what can be done if one only has a strong will. Most men would have given up the task as hopeless, but I’m not of that type. Thank goodness, I have an iron will.’

“This was no sooner thought than, catching my foot on a boulder, I pitched forward over the ledge.

Down I fell with a fearful speed, but did not fall far, as I stuck head downwards in a narrow crevasse.

“It was only after many desperate struggles that I succeeded in freeing myself and painfully climbed up to the place from whence I had fallen.

“In a more chastened spirit I continued slowly on my way. At times the route was over bare screes, upon which I slipped and fell, at others over rough boulders and jagged rocks, while again at other times it was along a comparatively easy path.

“At length I came to the entrance of a cave and wafted in. It seemed, strange to say, less dark here than outside. Suddenly, while turning a corner, I was

attacked by four men, who knocked me down, and, after hammering me all over, tied me up, a prisoner.

“I should say here that though I struggled to the best of my ability I found I was much weaker than I had been when last in this division. This was due to the fact that there were stirrings of better things, and these, though they helped me to rise higher, yet rendered me weaker in opposing evil to evil and strength to strength.

"I must stop now, but will just add this: I was once more in the third division, and about to suffer some of the pain similar to that which I had formerly inflicted on others."

The officer rose. "I must be off to school. I find it cursed hard work to learn," he added, and passed out through the door.

CHAPTER XXI

IN THE THIRD DIVISION. A LIBRARY IN HELL

'THE OFFICER'S' NARRATIVE, June 8th, 1914.

"The men who had captured me beat me thoroughly 'to show you who is master,' as they said. I remembered how I had often done the same, and tried to resist, but found that some subtle change had come over me. It was not exactly that my will had grown weaker, but that my will to do evil had grown weaker. I was therefore at a great disadvantage in trying to protect myself. The law was of course self-acting, but at the same time it tended to make me progress, for it rendered life very miserable, and begot a longing to escape.

"For a long time I struggled in the grasp of my captors, enduring all manner of tortures, but at length I got my opportunity and escaped. My tormentors started in pursuit; but though my will to do evil was weakened, yet my will to escape was strengthened if anything, and I quickly out-distanced them.

"I rushed along in the darkness over a stony plain for what seemed like weeks and weeks, hardly meeting a soul, and those few I met I avoided. At last I stumbled up against what appeared to be a huge building. After a little careful reconnoitering I discovered it was a library. I was at once struck with an idea. There now seemed a hope, faint yet ever present, that I should ultimately escape from Hell.

If that were so, I ought in the interest of science to explore it as far as possible. I determined therefore, though not without a great deal of trepidation, to enter the building.

"You have been hearing about libraries in the realm above this, nor was it entirely by accident that P. and I should both speak of similar subjects at about the same time, the one is the natural corollary to the other.

"Having entered the library, I was at once met by an evil-looking old man. You understand he looked old — very old, and very evil.

" 'I want to look over the library,' I began.

“ ‘Certainly, my son!’ he replied. ‘This library is much patronized by the wise. Those who would triumph in Hell must study even as they do on earth. Is that not so?’

“ ‘Of course, of course. Is this library restricted to the subject of hate, or are other subjects such as lust included?’

“*He*. ‘Mainly hate and cruelty, though a little lust of course has to be included. But lust as lust goes to its own library near the cities of lust. You should go there and study a little; it’s well worth while.’

“We then entered the library. It was an enormous place, and was divided into three sections:

(1) Book forms;

(2) Idea books;

(3) Living thought visualizations.

“Among the ‘forms’ were all books dealing with cruelty and hate for their own sake. I saw there shelves filled with the records of the Inquisition, books describing methods of poisoning your foes, books relating hideous crimes and savage tortures, histories of torture, so-called medical works, and so on. I looked at one of these ‘medical works.’

“ ‘What decides whether a book comes to Hell or not? For example, this book is on vivisection. It’s a French work. Do all books on that subject come here?’

“He replied, ‘No, indeed. It is all a case of the object of the work, and also the results it produces. With all books on vivisection, as with the thing itself, both object and result count. For example, believing he has a cure for some disease, a doctor inoculates some animals with that disease, tries his treatment, and afterwards publishes an account of his experiments.

The sole object of that man has been to improve the well-being of his fellow-men, and his book has that object. In such a case of course we should not get his book. But many men, especially on the Continent, inflict torture on animals simply out of a morbid curiosity to see how pain works.

As no useful object is served by these experiments, and the publication of them only incites others to do likewise, the books come here, and so naturally do their authors. Again, a scientist may conduct some experiments with a laudable motive, yet it may be extremely foolish or even wrong for him to publish such experiments broadcast. Such a book will often lead others to perform similar experiments out of curiosity or the love of inflicting pain. Such a book comes here.’

“I said, ‘Then I take it that most vivisectionists come here?’

“*He*. ‘Oh, we get quite a large number, but still not as many as you would expect. A good many of these men, though they seem a bit callous and are so, yet are genuinely moved by laudable, though often mistaken, motives. But still a very large number would come to us if it were not for the time they spend on the astral plane.’

“You see, they usually fall victims to the vengeance of the animals they have tormented, and this and a clearer vision of the truth causes then to regret what they have done, and leads them to strive to make amends.’

“ ‘How?’

“ ‘Oh, by encouraging men on earth to found societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals and such nonsense. Still, the so-called cause of science sends us many companions.’

“ ‘How are the scientists arranged for?’

“ ‘Oh, in different ways. Take the doctors, for example. We have a hospital not far from the library.’

“ ‘A hospital” ‘ I cried with surprise.

“ ‘ Yes, but here We don’t make any pretence of running it for the good of the patients. It’s all done in the interests of science, he! he! he! But you ought to go round and see it for yourself — that is, if you are not afraid of being operated on yourself, he! he! he!’

“We wandered on into the second section, and here I saw the ‘idea’ books. Each contained pictures instead of writing, and they were similarly devoted to cruelty, hate, and so forth. Every ingenious device for torturing the human body, and even the spiritual body, was displayed. Nor was that all, for there were diabolically clever ways of tormenting the mind.

“But the third section was the worst. Here at the sides of the room were countless ‘pictures’ in which we could see the anguish of the victim as he was slowly tortured, while at the two ends of the room were stages upon which were enacted various diabolical torments. All these were acted before us.

“The attendant said, ‘These rooms are devoted to works which describe the best ways to torture persons and the exact effects of any particular kind of torture, or, as we call it, operation. You see, we cannot here inflict pain unless we understand the effect of that pain. Thus the more fully we understand a particular torment, the easier it is to make another suffer that pain if we are strong-willed enough to subdue him.’

“Among the pictures I perceived many dealing with the vivisection of men, which were too horrible to describe.

“I discovered I was getting a bit squeamish as I looked at the atrocities. Still, it is only fair to say I had never been cruel for cruelty’s sake — callous at times, very revengeful and entirely reckless, I certainly was, but not cruel simply for the sake of seeing others suffer.”

CHAPTER XXII

A ‘HOSPITAL’ IN HELL

“After a while I left the library, and crossing a barren waste came to the so-called hospital. If the library had been gruesome, this place was a perfect nightmare. I passed through a gateway, and entered a large but dirty hall. ‘This is rather different to a hospital on earth!’ I thought; ‘there they usually carry the case for cleanliness almost too far.’

“The dirty hall led into an operating theater. I entered, and saw that on the ‘table’ a man was stretched out. He was fastened in such a way that he could not move, but otherwise appeared perfectly normal. The doctor then began some fearfully painful operation on one of the nerve centers. The shrieks of the victim, and the ghoulish delight of the audience, was more than I could stand, hardened sinner as I was. I therefore slipped out and found myself in the dissecting-room.

“Here living men, yes, and women were being dissected. As soon as one mangled body was left, it began to assume its original form again, and as soon as this was noticed, another operator would begin upon it once more.

“I noticed a woman who was being dissected by a young-looking ‘doctor’ pleading desperately with him to let her go. He hesitated for a moment, but a sharp word of reproof from an older man who was at work on a neighboring table hardened his heart, and he recommenced his work.

“I stepped up to him. ‘Who is this woman, and why do you torture her so? Has she done you some wrong?’

“He replied, ‘I know nothing about her or why she is here. You can ask her yourself if you like.’

“So I turned to her, and she, reprieved for the moment, said, ‘My name was Nini, and I lived in Paris. I was a demimondaine, and was for three years the mistress of a Jew. One day he caught me in an intrigue with a young actor, and there and then turned me out of the house, beating me black and blue.

“ ‘I was furious, and swore I would be revenged both on him and on my cowardly lover, who, instead of defending me, had run like a rabbit.

“ ‘It was not long before I got my opportunity. I fell in with the leader of a band of Apaches. He was rather a handsome, gentlemanly man in looks, and did not belong to the class of the ordinary Apache.

He was an awfully cunning rascal, and absolutely ruthless. I told him the Jew had a lot of money hidden in the house, and egged Him on to break in. One night the band did so, and I went with them. The Jew was rather an old miser, and only had one servant, a man who slept in, besides a woman who came in each day.

“ ‘The house was a decayed place in one of the suburbs of Paris.

“ ‘One of the band knocked the manservant senseless, and then we rushed into the Jew’s bedroom and tied and gagged him.

“ ‘Now I was almost sure that the Jew kept practically all his money at the bank, but I wanted my revenge, so I swore to my new lover that it was hidden somewhere in the house. ‘You must make him tell you,’ I cried, and shook my fist in the old Jew’s face.

“ ‘They pulled the gag out of his mouth, and someone put a dagger against his throat. ‘Tell us where your gold is hidden,’ hissed Gaston.

“ ‘It’s all in the bank except two hundred francs, which are in the top drawer of the bureau downstairs.’

“ ‘Liar!” cried I; “you know there is over twenty-five thousand francs hidden in the house.’

“ ‘My God, is that you, Nini?’

“ ‘It is, you pig,” I replied, “and I’m here to have my revenge, so you had better tell us where the money is at once, or you’ll be sorry you ever met me.’

“ ‘I am that now,’ he began, but I interrupted:

“ ‘You beast, take that,’ and scratched his face as hard as I could. He began to yell, and Gaston at once plugged his mouth.

“ ‘We’ve wasted enough time,’ he said; ‘bring up that charcoal fire.’

“ Several of the band, including myself, seized him and pushed his naked feet into the hot embers. Some held them firmly there, while others blew the charcoal till it burnt like a furnace.

“ ‘The Jew writhed and struggled, but no sound came from his lips, he was far too securely gagged. At length Gaston said, ‘Now we will try again,’ his feet being taken from the fire and the gag from his mouth.

“ ‘The treasure,’ said Gaston. ‘Quick, where is it?’

“ ‘In the bank. I wish to Heaven it were here, and then you would not torture me. For God’s sake let me go,’ he moaned feebly; but Gaston, more furious than ever, pushed the gag back, and then turned to me.

“ ‘Do you think he’s speaking the truth?’

“ ‘No, lies,’ I shrieked.

“ ‘Back then to the fire,’ and the torture recommenced. Suddenly one of the band who had been watching to see we were not disturbed rushed into the room.

“ ‘Quick, someone has given the alarm.’

“ ‘There was a stampede, some going through the door, others out of the window and down a pipe. I seized Gaston’s arm.

“ ‘You fool!’ I shouted, ‘Are you going to leave the Jew alive to give evidence? We shall be caught if you do.’

“ ‘You’re right, my dear,’ he replied, and turning back cut his throat.

“ ‘We escaped; but not long after Gaston knifed me one night when he was drunk, and in due course I arrived here. Now you understand why I’m in this awful room.’

“ ‘Aren’t you sorry for what you did to the Jew?’

“ ‘Sorry! Not I. It’s the one thing that consoles me. But I wish to Hell I could get out of this place.’

“I turned to the young doctor. ‘But what pleasure do you find in torturing her? It’s true she’s ugly now, her wickedness has made her so; still — she is a woman, and has done you personally no harm. Why do you do it?’

“He replied, ‘Will you take her place?’

“ ‘Not I! But still that’s rather different from torturing her when she’s done you no harm. What pleasure do you get out of it?’

“ ‘Pleasure! I don’t get any pleasure out of it. At first we do feel a kind of fiendish pleasure in seeing others suffer. Moreover, for a time the more wretched we grow the more we like to compel others to feel wretched. But after a time this mockery of a pleasure ceases, and we go on doing this sort of thing mechanically. We don’t fed any pity or sorrow for our victims; such

feelings were dead in our hearts years before we died, and, moreover, they don't deserve pity — they have all been about as cruel as we. But we feel no pleasure in doing it. It's a hollow, joyless world here, whatever you try to do to pass the time. Time! Damn it, there is no such thing as time.'

"As he spoke, he turned away from me and savagely plunged a scalpel into the poor wretch who lay on the slab before him.

"I began to walk out of the room, but almost at once I was seized by three or four scientists. 'This fellow will do in place of the one that's escaped,' shouted one.

" 'No, you don't!' I cried out, but in spite of my desperate endeavors they dragged me to the slab and fastened me down as they had formerly fastened him who escaped. Then I underwent the most fearful torture, but all the while I kept my wits about me and watched for an opportunity to get away.

"Before long it came. Two of the doctors started quarrelling. While their attention was thus diverted I sprang to the floor. I called to God for help, and made a dash for the door.

"One or two tried to stop me, but most paid no heed, such scenes were constantly occurring. Soon I was through the door, and out again on the desolate plain, running for all I was worth.

"After a while, as I found I was not pursued, I slackened my speed, and began to think over my experiences. One point especially struck me then, and has impressed me ever since, and that was that in Hell it is extremely difficult to get spirits to combine and work together for any common object — at any rate for any considerable period. Had there been any effectual combination among the doctors I could never have escaped. It seemed quite easy for a few of them to unite for a moment to make me prisoner, but this done, most forgot all about me, and started on something else. They were continually quarrelling among themselves, and even while I was there I saw more than one scientist placed on the dissecting slab by some of his companions. Indeed, the only times when effective, united action was possible was in such cases as my own conquest of Paris of the Revolution, where a man with an iron will was able to dominate and force a large number of others to obey him.

"Yes, the entire absence of the power of voluntary combination for any object is one of the characteristics of Hell.

"Well, now I must leave."

Getting up, he walked out of the room.

I followed his example, and, saying good-bye to H. J. L., willed that I should return.

CHAPTER XXIII

CHAKA. ATHENS

LETTER FROM 'THE OFFICER', June 13th, 1914.

"After my experience in the hospital I was more than ever anxious to get out of that division, but for a long time could find no way in which to do so. I kept away as much as possible from the City of Hate, or, indeed, all cities, for they all partook of the same nature.

"On one occasion I blundered suddenly into what seemed like a *kaffir kraal.* It was a fairly large one, and I soon discovered it was ruled over by the redoubtable Chaka. He seemed to be living very much the same sort of life there that he had lived on earth.

"One of his favorite amusements was to set his tribe to dig a huge pit, and when it was finished he would surround them with his imps, and order the latter to charge down upon them from all sides and hurl them into the pit. At other times he would order an expedition against a neighboring kraal, for there were many such kraals around, storm it, and drag off a large number of people as slaves. He had many other pleasant little devices for amusing himself in a way similar to that which he had done on earth.

"In short, I found that even in Hell like tends to attract like, and the niggers still tend to act like niggers and settle together, harking back to their old institutions. I had rather a rough time there, for I was of course soon spotted and dragged before Chaka, who declared I must be either a missionary or a trader. In either case I was an enemy, so he ordered me to be flung into a bonfire, which was specially made for me. Of course you are used to these material descriptions, and understand that that means really that their wills imposed the idea of a bonfire on mine.

"Well, I suffered rather badly, but not so badly as I should have done had I fallen into the hands of civilized men; for these savages, as a rule, Don't understand how to visualize and impose such visualizations on others as well as do the more civilized spirits. I managed to escape out of the fire, and though flung back again and again several times, at length succeeded in getting clear. This was due to the fact that news arrived that a neighboring chief was marching on the kraal at the head of quite a large army. Chaka was at once so busy organizing his forces, that I slipped away almost unnoticed.

“But just before I got quite clear I noticed a man rush at Chaka and try to stab him. It was, I learnt, a brother of his, and amid the confusion I bolted.

“At another time I found myself in Athens. I had always thought of it as a beautiful city of dazzling whiteness, with splendid sculptures. It may be so in the realms of faith, but down there in Hell I think it was one of the most dreary places I have ever seen. The very remnants of its beauty still visible through the ruin were the more pitiable. Its temples were broken and ruinous with wrecked pediments and fallen columns, and filth and slime were present everywhere. Its statues were mutilated, and, worse, transformed from the beautiful to the vile. Even what once must have been fine now appeared distorted. The faces seemed full of evil, repulsive, vicious, and hideous.

“It was as if the low vices and evil lives of the people who dwell there and their bad motives had entered into the statues and transformed them from things of beauty to monuments of iniquity.

“I got a bad reception there. A common informer at once raised the cry, ‘A spy, seize him!’ I was dragged into what seemed like a market-place, and at once tried. It was of course a perfect mockery of a trial, as you will readily guess. I was convicted and condemned to drink hemlock. I did so; I had no alternative; besides, I knew it was all a hollow sham — I could not die. The effect was peculiar. I grew stone cold at the feet, and gradually that coldness reached up and up till it touched the place where, had I been still a man, my heart would have been. I seemed to collapse on the floor, and at once the spectators cried, ‘He’s dead!’

“So they picked me up and carried me out through the city gates, threw me down, and went away. Of course I was not really dead, but for some time I was unable to do anything, so strong was the spell, as it were, that they had imposed upon me, to the effect that I was dead. However, before long they found something else to think about, and forgot me.

“At once I found myself becoming normal, and rising up, hurried from the place.”

CHAPTER XXIV

THE FIRST MESSENGER OF LIGHT

“By now I was about as sick of the division of hate as anyone could possibly be, and determined to make an effort to get out. I therefore knelt down on the stony ground and prayed. My God, how I prayed! At length an answer came, and in an unexpected manner. I saw coming towards me a light, yes, a real light! — not the horrible red glow which passes for fire down here, and has all

the unpleasant effects without the pleasant ones. No, this was a real light, silvery, clear and pure, come down from the realms above. It drew nearer and nearer, and by degrees I perceived that the light came from a man — or was it an angel? Yes, I felt sure it must be an angel. I stretched forth my hands in longing prayer. But as he came nearer and nearer I felt an intense pain. It was the light, and it seemed to be eating into my soul. At length I could bear it no nearer, and cried out in agony, 'Stop! Stop! for the love of God, stop! It burns! It burns.'

"Then came an answer like the notes of a silver trumpet: 'You have called for help, and I have come to give it. But all progress entails a price, and the price you must pay is the burning away of the filth which encumbers your soul. If you remain here, you will suffer and keep on suffering till you do come. If you go with me, you will suffer only for a little while and will be progressing, and that means you will be going away from suffering, slowly, perhaps, but surely.'

" 'I'll come, I'll come,' I sobbed. 'I'm inured to pain by now; lead on, and I will follow as well as I am able. O God, help Thou my stumbling steps.'

" 'I will come no nearer,' he answered, 'but follow me. A light shines in the darkness, and now as then, *the darkness comprehendeth it not*.'

"I will not now describe how he led me out of that division; it would take too long. Good-bye for the present. — The Officer."

TRANCE 'VISIT', MONDAY NIGHT, JUNE 22nd, 1914.

As before, I left my body behind, and passing out of the physical landscape entered that of the spiritual plane.

As soon as I reached H. J. L.'s room he said, "The officer is waiting to go on with his narrative."

The latter at once began:

"I followed the messenger at a distance. We climbed up and up, over rugged mountain sides, until on reaching the crest of a line of naked, barren hills I found, stretching before us, a kind of vast marsh. Across the marsh ran a broken path, which every now and then seemed to vanish, only to reappear again. All around was a thick fog, but the fog seemed lightest over the path. The messenger of hope led the way along this quaking path, and I followed at a certain distance because of the intensity of the light which came from him, and which at the same time illuminated the path we were on.

“Suddenly out of the darkness loomed a great figure, terrible and horrible. I knew him at once by instinct as the personification of hate. He barred our way and cried, ‘None who have entered these realms may ever depart. Return the way you came, or I will throw you into the marsh.’

“But my rescuer answered, ‘Out of the way. In this sign I conquer,’ and, raising his hand, he held aloft a cross. As he advanced the great spirit of evil, who was no man, but a being similar to the personification of drink, whom I had seen on the astral plane, shrank away, and at length, being driven off the path, hovered over the marsh.

“As soon as my rescuer had passed him he dived forward towards me, dividing me from my new-found friend.

“In an agony of fear I turned and fled, but my rescuer, seeing what had happened, turned and sprang after me. At once the evil spirit fled away from him into the marsh, while the messenger of light seized me by the arm.

“The pain was intense, for he seemed to be a living fire, yet in reality he was but a man who had come down from the realm of belief to help and save those in Hell.

“After a while the pain grew less as the light burnt away more and more of the evil in my nature. Meanwhile we crossed the marsh unmolested, and found ourselves in front of the gate of a city.

“ ‘This is the City of Lust,’ he explained; ‘it is part of the division of Hell devoted to the sins of the flesh. The greedy and covetous, thieves, gluttons, and immoral people come there. In this city Lust rules, and you must pass through it and resist the temptations to which you will be exposed. If you do not resist them you will have to remain in that division, at any rate for a time; but if you do resist them, you will be able to pass through, but even so you will not climb into the next division unless you help someone else to escape also.

“ ‘Now I must leave you and return to my work of rescuing souls from the City of Hate.’”

CHAPTER XXV

THE FOURTH DIVISION. THE LUSTS OF THE FLESH. CORINTH

“I passed through the gate, which was guarded by an evil-looking man, who was disporting himself with a woman who at one time had been beautiful, but now looked hideous from the lines vice had imprinted on her face.

“Once inside I gazed round at the place which at first I did not recognize, and so stopped a man in the Greek costume who was hurrying along and asked him, ‘What is the name of this city?’

“He stared at me in amazement, and at length said, ‘Where have you come from, stranger? The wildest barbarians know of Corinth. Look at the famous Gulf.’

“As he spoke he pointed at the marsh, adding, ‘Why, you have just come up from the gate leading to the harbor.’

“ ‘What! Do you call that filthy marsh the beautiful Gulf of Corinth?’ I cried in amazement.

“ ‘Yes, it does seem to be rather dirty, though why I can’t understand, and it’s very overcast here nowadays’

“ ‘Why, it’s because you are in Hell ‘I began, but he interrupted me.

“ ‘Nonsense; the truth of the matter is that we have displeased the gods by discovering the secret of eternal life. We never die here. I don’t know how long I’ve lived, but it must be for thousands of years. I must admit I sometimes wish I could die; I get weary of it, weary of always trying to do the same things, and when one’s done them, what does one get? They call it pleasure — pah!’

“Remembering the advice of my former deliverer I said, ‘Why not try and escape? Come with me to a more congenial part.’

“He laughed. ‘It’s very plain you are a stranger, or you would not suggest such a foolish idea. If I left here I should die, and, after all, I don’t want to do that.’

“ ‘But you are dead, and, being dead, how can you die again?’

“ ‘If I were dead, how could I be alive? You’re a madman. Keep your mouth shut or the people will cast stones at you.’

“Next moment he had gone, and I began to walk along what approximated to a street. Many of the buildings seemed to have collapsed, and all were filthy, but I could see that once they must have been fine, and were in the ancient Greek style. It’s strange. I’ve seen while on earth many ruins, but they were not disfigured by the sense of squalor and sin which disfigured those in Hell. The nearest thing I ever saw on earth to give one the same idea was certain suburbs which had fallen on evil days, and their fine houses had been turned into tenements for people of shady character.

“While I was cogitating over these matters the street, which had been practically empty, became full of women and men, who came running in a

wild bacchanalian rout. On they came, and next moment I was surrounded by them. Two women flung their arms round my neck, while a man filled a cup from a goatskin with what looked like wine and pressed it to my lips. It was ages since I had had any offer of kindness from anyone. In the City of Hate all that each man thought of was how to inflict pain on his neighbors and avoid pain himself. The two women spoke words of endearment to me, and the man pressed me to drink — and I did so.

"At once there were wild shouts of delight, 'He's one of us.'

"The wine seemed sour and unpleasant, and instead of slaking my thirst only increased it. I drank more and more in a desperate effort to obtain satisfaction, but with no result. Along we went in a wild disorderly throng, and I leave you to guess the scenes which were enacted. Drink and lust reigned here, but not necessarily cruelty.

True, occasionally cruel acts would be done here, and often lust would lead men on to cruelty. But the result of the latter was that the man was driven out by the people of Corinth as a disturber of the public peace, and compelled to go to the cities of hate.

Occasional and sporadic acts of cruelty do not bring about exile; it is only when these became a regular part of a man's life that the pleasure-seeking populace becomes annoyed and ostracizes him.

"But though cruelty was not encouraged, drunkenness, gluttony, selfishness, and lust were, above all lust. I will not attempt to describe the abominations I witnessed there, but the whole object of the community was the encouragement of immorality in every form.

"Every woman was what on earth would have been called a prostitute, and every place of amusement harped on the same theme. But I will draw a veil; your imagination must supply what I prefer to leave to it, only I will say that there was no satisfaction in anything we did. We seemed to be driven on by wild desire, but utterly unable to gratify it.

"Well, I drifted with the tide, forgetful in part of the advice of my rescuer, but more because my natural inclinations led me to long for my former amusements. Unsatisfactory as this existence was, it yet came as a great relief after the horrors I had seen and anguish I had suffered in the division below.

"I found that there were many other cities devoted to lust besides this version of Corinth, for, be it understood, there are other and nobler forms of Corinth in these realms of half belief, and even in other divisions of Hell. Of these

other cities of lust, I visited a place that seemed like Paris and another like London.

“After a while I blundered into a part of the latter which seemed to be given over to thieves of various sorts. Here they stole from each other, but, strange to say, no sooner had they succeeded in stealing something from their neighbors than the thing stolen turned to dust. More and more weary I grew of this empty world where nothing we did brought any real satisfaction, and real aim in life there was none.

“This division was the first one in which I saw a church. It was run by a man who had started some weird sect on earth with the object of doing himself well at the expense of his dupes. He had made quite a good thing of it at first, but in time his unworthy object, together with his secretly vicious life, had been recognized by most of his followers, who therefore forsook him, but a few fools still continued to follow him.

“After death he had come here, and still tried to gather a congregation by means of his sophistries and extraordinary prophecies. He got one, too — of sorts, consisting in the main of thieves, forgers, bogus company promoters, and such like. I came across several former acquaintances, who seemed quite pleased to see me. The service was the strangest mockery of a service. It was simply a blasphemous parody, yet, strange to say, it was not so intentionally. Both preacher and congregation strove to say a proper service, but whatever they said seemed to become perverted as it was being uttered. The hymns and prayers became blasphemous mockeries or licentious songs.

“More and more weary I grew of the whole place and began to long for a means of escape. At length, as I was walking through a square in ‘Paris’ I saw a crowd standing round a man, jeering and laughing at him. On approaching him I saw how bright he was, and knew at once by that that he must be one of the messengers. I stood among the jeering crowd and listened. The man was pleading with his hearers to remember how once as little children most of them had thought pure thoughts and dreamt of heaven. Were they now tired of this wicked, empty life? Why not repent and leave these dark and dismal regions? At this point he was interrupted by a man who cried out, ‘Stop those lies; we are all liars here, so what’s the use of trying to deceive as like that? The very religion to which you refer tells us that we are damned eternally. What’s the use then of trying to repent? We can’t, and if we could, it would be useless.’

“Another shouted, ‘You are only a more clever fraud than most of the other parsons down here. You look like an angel, but you are simply out to make

money out of us like the rest. Why, only last week a fellow was going round beguiling fools to give him money, promising that, if they would, it would be a proof that they were repentant and he could then get them out. Several fools actually believed him, and of course as soon as he had got the cash he bolted.'

"I knew that this was true, for this artful fraud had tried to swindle me; but having seen a real messenger, I knew the difference and wasn't taken in. But I likewise recognized this man as a genuine messenger, and so, when the crowd dispersed, which it did, jeering at the man ceased, I went up to him."

CHAPTER XXVI

HE IS HELPED BY ANOTHER MESSENGER

" 'I can see you are genuine,' I began. 'Can you get me out of this place? I'm sick of it.'

" 'If you truly wish to escape, I can,' he replied.

" 'I long to do so,' I replied.

" 'Kneel down here then and say the Lord's Prayer. I will say it with you to revive your memory.'

"I looked round and saw that the square was full of people, and for a moment I hesitated. Then I thought of what I had already suffered, and beside it the ridicule of these fools was nothing, so I sank on my knees and slowly repeated the Lord's Prayer after him.

"When I had finished he cried, 'Good; now follow me, and do not let them lure you from my side.'

"Quickly we hurried through the city, but we were not to get away without opposition. A couple of men stepped suddenly in front of us as we came in sight of the edge of the town, for in this part there was no wall. The men cried, 'Here, where are you off to?'

"My rescuer replied, 'We are going about our business, you go about yours.'

" 'Thanks, but this is our business. You are one of these pestilent fellows who are ever trying to persuade our friends and boon companions to desert us. We are sick of your pious humbug. Be off and leave him, or you'll be sorry for it.'

"My rescuer raised his hand threateningly. 'Begone, you accursed spirits, out of my way!'

"At once the two raised a shout:

“ ‘One of the enemy: seize him! and immediately a crowd rushed together, which became more and more threatening.

“My rescuer drew himself together, and raising his hand concentrated his will. ‘Out of my way in the name of God most high.’

“As he spoke he strode forward and I followed. The crowd fell back before us, and though they murmured and threatened, it seemed as if we should pass through without molestation, so greatly they feared the strong will of my rescuer.

“But just as I thought we were safely through, a woman sprang from the crowd and threw her arms round my neck. She was one whom I had ruined when on earth, and she came to claim me as her own. My rescuer seized her arms, untwined them from my neck, and threw her back into the crowd screaming.

“Then one of the two men who had previously barred our way sprang at my throat. I drew my will together and struck him to the ground. He sprang at me again, and this time his companion also followed suit. But my rescuer bent quickly forward and touched each of them on the arm, and they fell back shrieking, with the arm which had been touched withered as if by fire.

“Thoroughly cowed, the mob fell back, and we passed through safely. Soon we were out in the open country. Don’t let there be any misunderstanding, I use the word to distinguish it from the town, but there was nothing country-like save the lack of houses. There were no trees, no grass, no birds singing, not a flower, nothing but hard rock and sand and stones. On we journeyed, and presently in the distance I saw a faint, star-like light.

“ ‘Is that another rescuer?’ I cried.

“ ‘No,’ he replied, ‘that is a small mission centre or rest-house, and to it I am taking you. It stands at the edge of the barrier which separates this division from the one above in which are to be found materialists for the most part. There I hope you will be able to rest for a short season and obtain strength to enable you to pass through the remaining divisions of Hell up to the schools.’

“Slowly the faint star grew stronger, and after a while I found we were following a path, narrow, but well beaten, as if by many passers-by.

“ ‘Who has beaten this path?’ I inquired.

“ ‘The messengers who pass to and fro rescuing the lost. You seem surprised, but for how many countless ages, as men on earth reckon time (and therefore how much longer to us who labor here), have the messengers come seeking

the lost? Long before Christ came down to earth there were spirits laboring here.'

" 'Was the land of After-death organized very much as it is now even before the opening of the Christian era?'

" 'Yes, save that more spirits as a rule had to pass through Hell. The more primitive a man is at death as a general rule, the less will his spiritual side be developed. The less his spiritual side is developed, the longer he will be on the astral plane, and the more likely to pass for a time into Hell. But there comes a point in the development of man when his intellect becomes developed at the expense of his spiritual side, and then sooner or later the advance of civilization will have a set-back.

" 'Thus in the days of the Greeks and Romans the intellect outran the spiritual development, and so Hell became crowded with men who refused to believe in God or a future life. The fall of that civilization, though for a time it threw back civilization, made it easier for men in the West to develop their spiritual side. At times I fear that a similar catastrophe may once more be necessary. But God is merciful, and we from this side are anxiously working to infuse new spiritual life into the world without the necessity of such a disaster.

" 'In early, primitive days the astral plane or Hell held almost all who passed over for a long time.'

" 'But this seems unjust, for they knew no better,' I said.

" 'It was not unjust; it was simply a great natural law. Those whose whole lives were devoted to fighting and cruelty would naturally go on acting in the same way for a long time after death. It would only be after a long period spent on this side that they would begin to desire a different kind of life.'

" 'All those who resisted the temptation to obsess would probably remain on the astral plane till they had developed sufficiently to pass upward to the spiritual plane. At the same time, the tendency to obsess among primitive people is very strong, and therefore many fall to Hell.'

" 'Is it the whole course of our life that fixes the particular division of Hell into which we finally fall, or is it the type of obsession which we practice.'

" 'Many old men pass almost at once to Hell. They have, outworn their astral bodies almost as much as they have their physical bodies. These will sink down to the division corresponding with that type of sin which has predominated in their lives — hate, lust, and so forth. But those who pass over in early or middle life have not yet worn out their astral bodies, nor completely developed their character. Their division is that which

corresponds with the type of obsession which they have practiced. That is the worst type of obsession.'

"I interrupted, 'I understand. In my own case I obsessed for drink, lust, and finally for revenge. The latter, being a more spiritual sin, dragged me down deeper than would the other two types of obsession.'

"My rescuer continued: 'At the same time, the type of life a man has lived very largely decides the type of obsession which is likely to tempt him most.

A lustful man, if he falls into obsessing, will probably do it for the purpose of satisfying his lust, and so will fall ultimately into the division in which lust predominates.

" 'But see, here is the mission centre or rest-house.'

"As he spoke I saw a building plainly yet strongly built. The door was small, and windows there were none save at the top above the door. From this came the light we had steered by so-far.

"My rescuer hammered at the door, and, as it opened, a flood of light poured out which blinded me for the time. My rescuer seemed to drag me forward, but I could see nothing, only I heard the door crash to behind me.

"Now," added the officer. "I think it's time you returned." – J.W.

CHAPTER XXVII

HE HAS TO RETURN TO CORINTH AND RESCUE ANOTHER SOUL

TRANCE VISION OF J. W., June 29th, 1914.

Again I passed through the air from this plane of existence to that of the spirit plane. I found H. J. L. and the officer awaiting me in the room, and almost at once the latter resumed his narrative.

"I have no very clear idea of what took place in that temporary rest-house, the light was so intense that I was practically blind while there. But at the same time I gained some rest. A feeling of peace and hope seemed to fill that building, utterly unlike the atmosphere in any of the ordinary buildings in Hell.

"To me a man used to speak words of comfort and hope, and my spirit seemed to grow more quiet. Day after day I used to hear singing, real singing, sweet

and beautiful; oh! how different from the horrible discord I had heretofore heard in Hell designated by the name of singing.

“At length the messenger who had brought me to the house said, ‘Now you must go back strengthened by your rest here to the fourth division. Once then yon must get some companion to come with yea. When you have done this, return to this rest-house with him, and here you will meet one whom you drove from your side long years ago.’

“So back I went to that city. I must admit the darkness came as a relief after the great light, but otherwise I came back feeling more disgusted than ever with life in Hell.

“Once back in the city I set to work to find someone who would come with me, but it was no easy task. At length, however, I got into conversation with a woman, whom I soon realized was sick of this sort of life.

“ ‘Why don’t you try and get out of this place?’ I asked her; ‘I can see you are sick of it. There’s nothing here which brings any real pleasure. It’s all an empty show — shadows, just shadows. We gain nothing here by vice. Why not try and get into better surroundings? I’m going to try, so come along with me; it will be less lonely if we go together.’

“ ‘What’s the use she replied. ‘You know we are in Hell, *where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.*’

“ ‘The fire mayn’t be quenched, but we can get out of it.’

“ ‘How can we? We are damned eternally. When I was alive I did not believe in a future life, much less the Hell, so I said, “A short life and a merry one.” I find now I was wrong — I wish to Heaven I had been right. If death only ended all, but it doesn’t! The parsons were right after all — there is Hell, and we are in it, and there’s nothing more to be said. Oh that I could die!’

“I said, ‘All the same, though they were right about there being such a place as Hell, they were wrong in saying it was eternal, or, rather, Hell itself may be eternal, but no one need remain in it eternally. I can prove it. Here am I in this division, but I’ve been far lower — I’ve been down to the very bottom of Hell, and since then have been steadily rising!

“ ‘Are there other places than this in Hell? I had no idea of it!’

“ ‘Many other depths below, and also divisions above, I believe, through which we shall have to pass.’

“She looked at me intently. ‘Yes, I can see you are speaking the truth, but this is all quite new to me.’

“ ‘Well, will you come?’

“ ‘Yes, I will. If we fail, at any rate we shall have had some excitement. It will be a new sensation, and it’s ages since I have had one.’ “

CHAPTER XXVIII

A NEWSPAPER IN HELL. RACING

“So we set out together, making our way cautiously through the city. Every now and then bands of revelers would burst out of houses and taverns. Sometimes they took no notice of us; at others they would call to us to join them. Once or twice they danced round us in a circle, and on one occasion four roisterers seized the woman who was with me and carried her oft in spite of her resistance. I went after them, knocked down two, and thereupon the others dropped my companion, whose name, by-the-bye, was Ada, and made off.

“In one place I noticed a band of burglars employed in breaking into a house, while on passing through the market, which was crowded, I saw a man busy making a speech. We stopped to listen, and found that he was trying to promote a company to build a railway from Hell to Heaven.

“Many of his hearers were scornfully declaring there was no such place as Heaven, but others were easily gulled, and began to subscribe eagerly. We passed the offices of a paper — oh yes, we have papers in Hell — just as an edition was being sent out. Obtaining a copy, I found the chief items of interest were these:

“*New Play*. Great success of Mr. Esmond’s work, ‘The Folly of Virtue.’

“*Police Court News.* Arrest of two missionaries as spies and disturbers of the peace.

“*Local Scandal.*

“*Financial News. New companies.*

“*Racing News. All the starters.*

“*New Arrivals in Hell.* Full list, together with interviews with prominent visitors.

“The only item which filled me with surprise was the racing news.

“ ‘How do you manage for horses?’ I asked Ada.

“ ‘Oh, we imagine them. We each think of some famous racehorse we knew of on earth. Then we visualize it as racing along the course and winning. On the day of the race anyone enters any horse he likes and the names are nnounced.

Then each backer imagines that his horse is going to win. The more people there are backing a horse and the stronger their wills, the more likely it is to win. The worst of it is the judge generally declares the horse he favors has won, even when it obviously had not. We see all the horses racing, and we see the one that has the strongest backing gradually pull ahead, but in spite of this the judge often declares that it has fouled another.'

" 'I suppose that's often true?'

" 'Oh, it usually is. You see some of the backers are sure to devise a cunning underhand trick in their minds whereby they can outdistance other horses. In short, every horse will have fouled somewhere. But there's always a fearful row after a race, usually culminating in a free fight.'

"We now had left the city behind, and Ada began to be very frightened.

" 'This loneliness is terrible!' she whispered; 'it is awful! Let us go back.'

" 'Nonsense,' I replied, ' we haven't dragged so far to chuck up the sponge now. Come along. Look, there is the light.'

"The faint star of light from the rest-house seemed to revive her spirits.

" 'What a lovely star! I've never seen a star since I died,' she murmured in an awestruck voice. 'How beautiful they were! Yes, let us go nearer to it.'

"So slowly we drew nearer and nearer, and as the light grew, it seemed to bring us strength. At length it began to burn, and again she hesitated.

" 'This is very painful, and it seems to grow worse as we approach.'

" 'Do you call this pain? Nonsense! You should go through what I have suffered, and then you'd know what pain is. This light is merely cleansing us, burning a little of the dirt out of our spiritual bodies.'

"My example and my strength of will helped to keep her on the path, until at length we reached the door, and, on knocking, it opened to us.

"The light blinded us, but kind hands, which nevertheless seemed made of fire, helped us in. We were separated, and I found I was in a room which was much darker than the others. I was therefore able to see dimly, and perceived that the darkness was due to the fact that a window had been opened in the wall, and through it came in darkness in waves like the billows of the sea."

CHAPTER XXIX

HE MEETS HIS GUARDIAN ANGEL AT LAST

“Then I heard a voice ringing through the darkness clear and strong. There was a musical note in it which reminded me of a trumpet. It spoke thus: ‘son, I rejoice that at length you are drawing nearer to me. For many years you have driven me from your side, but I have never forgotten you, and I have prayed without ceasing that you should be led to turn towards God. Still for a while you will be unable to see me; the brightness of my visage would be too terrible for you to gaze on in your present state’

“ ‘Oh, great spirit, is it for this reason that it takes so long to come into the presence of God?’

“ ‘It is indeed. How could any man pass straight into the presence of God’s brightness? But now let us start upon the journey. Follow my voice, and as you progress gradually I shall become visible to you as you are able to bear the light.’

“Then one of the messengers entered the room and led me through the rooms of light out by another door from that by which I had entered. Then a great distance off I saw a tiny star-like light, and from it seemed to come a voice; ‘Follow me, and I will lead you forth.’

“So I followed that light through the darkness and every now and then my guardian spirit, as I afterwards learnt to call him, spoke words of comfort and encouragement. Slowly and painfully I scaled the precipitous cliffs, often falling and stumbling, but still mounting higher. When I was about half-way up, the path ran along a narrow ledge, and on turning a corner of this I saw a great cave from whose mouth rushed out a band of spirits, but just as they seemed about to hurl me into the depths beneath, the star of light suddenly grew larger and brighter. It advanced towards me, and at once my assailants fled shrieking away.

“Once I was rescued, my guide returned to his original position, and I was glad, as the light had burned me, though to a less degree than it had my enemies.

“Presently I saw a great waterfall, which seemed to break right across my path. It was not beautiful as a waterfall is on earth, but seemed inky black, and the foam only appeared dirty and muddy instead of white.

“At first I despaired of being able to continue on this path, and sought out a track which would lead higher up the side of the cliff, but I could find none.

On looking towards my guide I noticed he was standing close up against the edge of the waterfall, and as I watched he seemed to pass through it.

“On approaching nearer I found that the water fell clear of the ledge of rock in a kind of arch and went thundering down into the black chasm below. You may be surprised that there was any sound, since it was not material water. I cannot myself quite explain it, but I think seeing the waterfall I expected to hear the sound, and so imagined it. Anyway, the noise was like thunder as I approached it, and summoning up all my courage I crept along beneath the arch of water until I reached the other side.

“Now the path assumed more and more the shape of flights of steps, and in time it became obvious that these were not natural but built deliberately, and, moreover, that they were kept in constant repair. Till now I had hardly ventured to speak to my guide, but now I inquired, ‘Who is it who has built and kept in repair this path and stairway? ‘

“He replied, still from a distance, ‘Son, a band of noble spirits who keep a house of refuge whose beacon light is just becoming visible. They hold that house in relays, and while on duty there, one of their chief tasks is to keep guard over this path into the fourth realm of Hell. Many of the spirits below band themselves together with the firm resolve to damage, and if possible destroy the various paths out of Hell which the messengers have made.’

“ ‘Are these spirits devils or men, and if the latter, why do they do it?’

“He answered, ‘Just men and women who, like many evil persons on earth, hate to see old companions leave them for the paths of rectitude. The beings you designate as devils are seldom found save in the lowest depth but one of Hell. The vices personified are, however, found in each division to which they are appropriate. These upper realms of Hell are almost entirely occupied by men.’

“ ‘Where do suicides go?’ I inquired suddenly.

“ ‘Usually to the realms of hate, but occasionally it may be to the fourth division. Many, however, expiate their offence on the astral plane.’

“ ‘Master . . . !’ I began again, ‘ . . the light grows so bright that it begins to cast a faint beam across the path we are treading.’

“ ‘Yes, my son, we are gradually approaching it, and, besides, those in the house of refuge know that we are struggling towards them, and therefore are praying for help for us. As they do so, the light, which is in reality simply their faith, grows stronger, and as they pray about us and think of us it is directed towards us.’

“Gradually the light grew stronger and stronger and began to dazzle my eyes, but much of the very worst part of my character must have been burnt away, for I did not suffer so keenly as when approaching the last house.

“Now we stood at the top of the stairs, I, close by the door which barred my way completely. My guide had passed through it without the slightest difficulty.

“Apparently in answer to the message he had taken with him into the house the door was opened, and kind hands led me into a covered courtyard, and thence into the house itself.

“The light of course blinded me now, but I learnt by degrees that this house differed in several particulars from the first one I had entered. It was a good deal larger, and was built round a covered courtyard. Part of its duties was to guard the stairway to prevent it being damaged by the evil ones who dwell below, and also to see that no dwellers in the fifth division inadvertently wandered down into the fourth, for if they did so they could not easily return.

It was also a place of refuge and refreshment both for the messengers and for those they rescued. Here let me add that those who grew too evil for the fifth division were hurled over the edge of the precipice by the populace which they had exasperated to fury. The fifth division is on the whole eminently respectable. It rather prides itself on it, though it is not so insistent on this fact as the sixth realm, which makes quite a fetish of it.

“Finally, this gatehouse also protected the head of a bridge, a covered bridge which stretched across an ink-black river, which here plunged over the cliff, and thus formed the great waterfall under which I had passed. The further end of this bridge was likewise held by the brotherhood who were in charge of this house.

“I will stop here, and next time will tell you more about this river.”

CHAPTER XXX

THE FIFTH DIVISION. THE BLATANT MATERIALISTS. CHURCHES IN HELL

TRANCE VISIT, July 6th, 1914.

ON arriving at the place where H. J. L. lived I found 'The Officer' waiting with him, who at once took up his narrative: —

"Led by my guide I crossed the bridge, which was entirely covered in, and therefore full of light, and entered the watch-house on the further side of the river. Here we did not stay long, but passed out once more into the fog and gloom. For some time we walked along the bank of a broad and filthy stream which ran into the great river. With the stream on our right hand we journeyed till we reached a huge city. It was a most dismal place — great chimney-stacks everywhere, and factories and warehouses on every side, and between them ran squalid, dirty streets. Filth and grime were everywhere. In and out of the factories moved streams of workmen, and I stopped to inquire what they were doing. "One replied, 'Working; what do you suppose?'

" 'But what do you do with the goods?'

" 'Sell them, of course; but the funny thing is that as soon as they are sold they return to the factory from which they came. That's why it is all the factories have so many huge warehouses. We are constantly building new ones to hold the goods. The whole place seems choked with them — can't get clear of the damned things. The factories are constantly getting jammed up with the things that return, and no matter how we try to get rid of them, they always come back.'

"*The Officer*. 'Why don't you burn them?'

"*The Stranger*. 'Burn them? Why, we've burnt a dozen great warehouses at a time, but there they are again. Simply can't get rid of the beastly rubbish.'

"*The Officer*. 'Why do you go on making the goods then?'

"*The Stranger*. 'We can't help it. We seem driven by some strange force. Compelled to work and work without ceasing. There's no rest. A strange, mad instinct seems to drive us on. When I was on earth I thought of nothing but my work. I worked hard — damned hard — day after day, and this is my reward. On and on and on, doing the same thing over and over again, without rest, for ever and ever and ever. I can't make it out.'

"*The Officer*. 'I suppose you thought of nothing but your material interests when on earth, and so in Hell you still go on in the same way.'

"*The Stranger*. 'Hell! there's no such place, or Heaven either.'

"*The Officer*. 'Where are you, then?'

"*The Stranger*. 'I don't know, and don't care. Why, look what a number of churches and parsons there are here. But I've no time to stop talking to fools like you. I must get back to my work,' and he entered the factory.

"I went on till I came to a large square, in which were no less than three churches. One belonged to the Church of England, another to the Roman Catholics, and a third to one of the Nonconformist bodies. I went into the Anglican Church, and I found a service in full swing. The parson was preaching rather a dry sermon. He harped on three themes by turn:

(1) That people had no business to go to either of the other two churches, and should show more deference to himself as the representative of the National Church;

(2) that they should subscribe more generously to the church and, incidentally, to its vicar, and he glossed these two themes over by platitudes about social reform and helping the material well-being of their fellow-creatures, especially those whom he designated as the lower classes.' Somehow this part of his theme rang very hollow.

(There is no mention of the 3rd theme - Ed.)

"I noticed the congregation paid little heed to the sermon. Some were whispering scandal to their next-door neighbors, others, mostly women, were criticizing the clothing of their neighbors. Several men were talking business, and in one corner two men were arguing violently, so much so that they interrupted the preacher, who glared at them angrily.

"I went out and visited the other two churches, and found a similar performance in each.

"We then went on and came to the shopping area. Here we found a similar state of affairs to that in the factories. People came to buy, but the money they gave for the goods returned to themselves, while the goods returned to the shops almost at once.

"I asked one shopkeeper where he got the things he tried to sell since the factories could not supply him.

"*He*. 'Oh, they came here with me. They are the things which were in my shop when I died. Here they stick till I'm sick and tired of seeing them.'

"*The Officer*. 'Why don't you give up keeping a shop?'

"*He*. 'What a ridiculous idea! What on earth should I do without my shop? Why, my whole life has been centered in selling things ever since I was a boy.' He turned away in disgust, and began to serve a lady who wanted to buy a new hat, which returned to the shop a few minutes after she had taken it out.

"Then I went to the council chamber, and found a crowd of men wrangling about improving the town, but after listening for a long time, I came to the conclusion that, though they might talk for ever, nothing would ever be done.

"I passed out of the town and came to open fields. I use the word to describe the place, but it looked more like a piece of waste ground covered with rubbish, and entirely bare of grass.

"Here there was a stand, and around the field was a dense crowd of people watching what appeared to be a football match; but though the players seemed to try and play, no goals were scored, and nothing really happened.

"While I was watching, one man walked off in disgust, and was promptly hooted by the crowd.

"He turned round savagely, and, after using a string of words which I will not repeat, said, 'What's the use of playing here?! One never scores a goal, and one does not even enjoy running after the ball as one used to do. I'm fed up with the whole thing.' As he strode away I saw a bright stranger come up to him, and knew that soon another soul would escape from Hell."

CHAPTER XXXI

THE SLEEPERS

"We journeyed for some time till we came to a cave, and here I found quite a number of men fast asleep. Strive as I would, I could not wake them.

"This surprised me, for till then I had never seen anyone asleep in these realms — having no bodies, we do not require sleep.

"I questioned my Guardian Angel, who now had drawn much nearer to me.

"He looked very sad as he replied:

" 'Son, these were men who stoutly maintained that after death there was no life. They were strong-willed men who, had they believed, might have done much good; as it is they led many astray, and since they held this view so strongly they have, as it were, self-hypnotized themselves into a state of coma, from which it is very hard to rouse them. Here they lie, age after age, and while men whom the world considered far worse than they, and who had sunk

far lower in Hell, have been able to see the error of their ways and progress, they remain unconscious, and cannot learn.'

"*The Officer.* 'This is truly terrible; is there no way of waking them?'

"*My Guide.* 'After long ages the spell grows weak, then there come to them great messengers of light, who, after much striving, do succeed in breaking through their sleep and rousing them.'

"At length we reached a place of deep chasms and beetling crags, and after wandering along at the base of a range of these cliffs we came in sight of a narrow, slippery stairway. As we did so suddenly a figure came hurtling through the air and fell to the ground in front of us. It sprang to its feet and fled away into the darkness, and was soon lost to sight among the crags and chasms.

" 'Who was that?' I inquired of my guide.

" 'Some unfortunate creature who has offended against the traditions of the sixth division. They pride themselves on their respectability there, and those who offend too deeply are hurled forth by the outraged inhabitants. Self-righteousness is the besetting sin there. They love to judge their neighbor and to spread scandal. But look, there is the light of the rest-house, and soon you will be able to judge for yourself what manner of men dwell in the sixth division of Hell.'

"How painful was the climb up that long, long flight of steps. But ever the beacon light grew stronger, till soon it illumined a path. Though the light hurt, yet I bore it stoically, and soon we entered the haven of refuge.

"Here I must stop, for it is time for you (J. W.) to return."

So having said goodbye to both, I (J. W.) returned to earth.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE SIXTH DIVISION. A CHURCH AND ITS VICAR

LETTER FROM 'The Officer', Sept. 5th, 1914.

"We stayed but a short time in this rest-house, which was a large one, before continuing our journey. Once more the fog engulfed us, and we seemed to turn to the right, and soon I saw the grey mass of a city. This city had a high wall on the side overlooking the great precipice, and it was from one of the towers of the wall that the man we saw fall into the fifth division of Hell had been cast.

“The town consisted for the most part of modern-looking houses of the dreary, respectable type that one sees in many of the London suburbs. Some attempt was evidently made to keep the place moderately clean, and this was the first division in which this had been attempted.

“Seeing a theater, and asking my guide if I might enter it, he permitted me to do so, himself waiting outside. As I entered I saw one of the inhabitants of the city and spoke to him. He seemed slightly taken aback, and said:

“ ‘We’ve not been introduced!’

“ ‘Oh, damn it, what does that matter?!’ I replied.

“ ‘Please do not swear!’ he answered.

“ ‘I apologized, and then asked him what sort of plays were shown in this city.’

“ ‘All sorts, so long as they are not improper. We will not permit any suggestion of impropriety here. Nothing vulgar or immoral is permitted. All our plays and music-halls are conducted on the best principles.’

“*I.* ‘That’s the first time since I’ve been in Hell that I’ve heard people object to impropriety.’

“He looked pained.

“ ‘I wish you would not use that word. There is no such place as Hell, and certainly we are not in it.’

“ ‘Oh, Don’t talk nonsense ... ,’ I began. ‘All this realm is Hell, so what’s the use of pretending it isn’t. I’ve been long enough in Hell to know that.’

“ ‘Stranger,’ he replied, ‘who are you, and from where do you come?’

“So I told him briefly my history. As I went on he slowly drew away from me, and at length broke in with ‘That’s enough, thank you. Either you are a liar or a villain. I know perfectly well I’m not in Hell. I suppose I’m still on earth, but anyway I never have associated with scoundrels, and I am not going to begin now. Good-day, and let me give you a piece of advice, which I do out of the kindness of my heart — I always was a kind-hearted man — Don’t tell that story to anyone else here, or they will have you thrown over the battlements,’ and he made off.

“I went into the theater. A musical comedy was being performed. A poorer show I’ve hardly ever seen. The music was not absolutely discordant, as it is in the other divisions of Hell, but it was feeble stuff; the very worst kind of so-called popular music. Plot there was none, and the whole show was so banal and trashy, that I cleared out at the end of the first scene. I noticed that the audience seemed as bored as I was, but nevertheless they stayed on.

“Next I tried a music-hall which advertised outside that its show was ‘A most Refined entertainment. Funny without being Vulgar.’ It certainly wasn’t funny, and it certainly was, to my thinking, intensely vulgar — not indecent, but just vulgar. Low comedians of the worst type, vapid songs, silly aimless tricks — in short, absolute trash.

“On coming out, which I did very quickly, I came to a concert hall. Here at least, I thought, I may see something worth seeing, or at any rate hear it. But no; of all the banal twaddle I think that concert was the worst.

“I left as quickly as I could, and seeing a picture-gallery, entered it without expecting much satisfaction, and was not disappointed. All the rubbishy pictures in the world seemed to have been gathered together and hung on the walls of this ugly, pretentious building.

“I then returned to my guide, who had, as it were, concealed his natural brightness, and, led by him, made my way through mean streets towards the center of the town. Here I entered a very ugly brick church built in the pseudo-Gothic style.

“A service was being conducted by a fat, slimy sort of parson, who seemed to mouth his words in a succulent, unctuous manner which irritated me intensely. The service was not absolutely discordant or blasphemous, it was merely hollow and unreal. The prayers were gabbled off as quickly as possible, and it was obvious that there was no real belief behind it. It was merely a form carried through by priest and people because it was considered the proper thing to do.

“ ‘I will give you a few of the phrases which struck me in his sermon:

“ ‘Above all, my dear brothers and sisters, you must help to keep this great city clean of every form of vice. Each and every one of you should make it his or her business to watch for evil, to hunt it out and drive it forth. If you suspect that any person is secretly guilty of some vicious practice, do not rest till you discover his or her secret sin. Even if it is someone near and dear to you, it is your duty to denounce it. If you want help or advice in this great work, come to me and tell me what you suspect. Don’t wait till the evil thing becomes rampant; strike at once. In me you will always find a ready helper. Do not let any false ideas of honor stand in your way. In searching out evil, you are entitled to use any means.

“ ‘Let me give you an example. A friend of yours does not come to church. You suspect her of carrying on an intrigue with someone else’s husband. You should pretend to be sympathetic, you should trap her into a confession if possible. You should warn her husband; above all, you should tell me.’

“He went on in this strain for some time, and ended up with, ‘and when guilt is established, no mercy must be shown to the guilty members of society. They must be driven out. They must be hurled from the battlements into the great chasm from which there is no return.’

“In conclusion, he announced there would be a social entertainment next day in order to raise funds for church improvements.

“As I was going out I heard one member of the congregation say to another, both men:

“ ‘What I would like to know is what happens to all the money which he is always raising for church improvements.’

“The other replied, ‘I’m sure he pockets it, or at any rate most of it.’

“The first man, ‘Yes, so I think, but what does he spend it on?’

“The second man, ‘I suspect that he leads a double life — has a second home, you know.’

“I heard no more, but I determined to go to the ‘social entertainment.’

“In due course I arrived there, and in a sort of church hall found the vicar and his curate surrounded by a worshipping band of females. They hung on his every word, and when they got a chance poured scandal into his ear. Between times they told spiteful tales about the vicar and various female members of his congregation. At length I got a chance of a few words with the vicar alone, and said:

“ ‘Vicar, I’m going to ask you a plain question between man and man, and you can rely on my discretion. Do you believe in the truths of the Christian religion which you have to teach, or are you, like so many learned divines, personally convinced the whole thing is a myth, and if so, do you really think there is a God, Heaven and Hell, and so forth?’

“He pressed his two hands together and said unctuously:

“ ‘A great deal turns on what you mean by believe. A clergyman has a great responsibility. He must not say anything which may cause a weaker brother to stumble.’

“I pressed him closely on the point, and at length he said:

“ ‘Personally I have long thought that the tale of Christ is a myth, a beautiful myth, and I am sure St. Paul thought so. I don’t think the early Christians ever thought otherwise. They regarded it as a symbol which taught a great truth, just as the ancient Egyptians preached of the death and resurrection of Osiris.

I don't imagine for a moment that an educated Egyptian believed that Osiris ever really lived; it was a parable. Unfortunately the ignorant gradually grew to regard the parable as literally true, and during the Middle Ages this belief became universal. Today we are by degrees recovering the truth and clearing away the dross of superstition, but of course we cannot proclaim these facts from the house-tops. Indeed, if we did, we should probably be called agnostics, and turned out of our livings. Still, quietly, we are doing a great work — a great work.'

"I said, 'If, then, the whole of Christianity is based on a parable, of what use is the Church?'

"*He*. 'Of the very greatest, my friend. It is a great moral force. That is what it was originally intended to be, and in that sphere it can be of the greatest benefit. Oh, I foresee a long life of useful work for the Church when freed from all the superstitions accretions which have attached themselves to its ancient form. Many men who at present are disgusted at what they rightly regard as puerile fables will rally to it as a great social factor for the moral uplifting of the masses.'

" 'I think some people are inclined to lay too much stress on its social value, and overlook the importance of its moral influence, but they are materialists; thank Heaven, I am not one of them.'

"*I*. 'Do you think there are such places as Heaven and Hell, and is there after all such a being as God?'

"*He*. 'With regard to the last point, I think we are not as yet in a position to give a definite answer. We are at liberty to hold our own views. To some people the conception of a God of some sort is necessary, like the parables of Christ, or they would cease to obey the moral law; but, personally, while I would not be so presumptuous as to say there is no God, I do not consider one is essential. I consider that this world is governed by laws, and the moral law is the highest. Those who break the moral law sooner or later are punished by that law, so that I do not see that an arbitrary Creator is necessary; but, of course, I should not say this to my flock as a whole.'

"I interrupted the flow of eloquence with, 'Still, it is not necessary to conceive of God as an arbitrary Autocrat. He may be a wise, all-seeing Judge, who co-ordinates His various laws.'

"*He*. 'He may be; but to turn to the question of Heaven and Hell, I think I may say frankly I don't believe in either. I consider that each man, roughly speaking, gets his rewards and punishments on this earth either by disease or

from his fellow-men. Hell I consider a monstrous idea. For my part I should hesitate of course to say there is no life after death, but I doubt it.'

"I stared at him for a minute, and then said, 'But how did you get here?'

"*He*. 'In rather a curious way. I was very ill, and at length became unconscious. While I was in this state I had some most curious and horrible dreams. I won't trouble to describe them, but then I was evidently delirious. When I recovered I found myself here, without my wife. No one could tell me exactly how I came here, but being here, and finding that the vicar of this church had just disappeared in a most mysterious way, I took up his cure, and have done his work ever since. Everybody is agreed that he must be dead. That's the curious thing about life here. People don't die. I never have a funeral service. They just vanish. I can't help thinking the sanitary authorities dispose of the bodies silently, but, after all, I've other things to bother about. My parish is a fashionable one, in the best part of the city, and I have to devote my whole time to it.'

"*I.* 'But you've married again?'

"*He*. Yes. I soon came to the conclusion that while I was ill, my wife must have died, so I had no hesitation in marrying again. Of course I'm too old to need that sort of thing, but my wife is a great help in the parish — a great help. I'm afraid she is not always tactful, but one can't have everything.'

"*I.* 'Then even you do not realize that you are in Hell?'

"*He*. 'What a preposterous question!'

"I then proceeded to give my reasons for knowing we were in Hell, and narrated my adventures since I died. He listened very coldly, and at last broke in with:

" 'Thank you, I've heard enough. If I were a swearing man I should use strong language, but as it is, I will content myself with saying that I don't believe a word you've told me. I'm sorry I have wasted my time talking to such a man. If you are not a liar, then, by your own showing, you are an unmitigated scoundrel. Good-day, and I should advise you to leave this city as soon as possible, for although I shall not myself denounce you, being a humane man, others will certainly discover your true character, and then you can expect little mercy.'

"He left me, and a moment later began to tell two women who hurried up to him all about me, so I thought it best to depart without undue delay. Goodbye."

"I close. — H. J. L."

CHAPTER XXXIII

A DEBATE IN HELL AS TO WHETHER THERE IS A LIFE AFTER DEATH

TRANCE VISION. Sept. 7th, 1914.

As soon as I reached the house in which H. J. L. lived, I found the officer waiting, and he at once continued his story.

"After wandering through the city for some time I saw a building which appeared to be a sort of Institute. On looking in I perceived that there was a kind of debate in progress. It appeared that some missionaries from the higher realms had been holding meetings, and as a result someone had proposed the theme: *Is there a Life after Death?*

"One man said, 'there is no evidence that men live after death. Some people I know argue that we have died, and therefore since we are now alive this fact proves that there is a life after death. But this is begging the question. We are alive, and therefore this proves that we have not died. We have all been very ill, and on recovering find the whole earth changed. Look, how grey the sky is, and how dark it is all day!'

" 'Yes! broke in another man, 'that's why I'm sure we are dead, and I believe we are in Hell!'

" 'Preposterous' cried the first speaker.' We are just as comfortable here as we were before our illness. I don't believe in Hell, but if, for the sake of argument, we admit that there may be such a place, all will agree that this cannot be Hell. The parsons taught us that Hell is a place of eternal torment, *where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched*. Well, there is nothing of that sort here. We are of course all rather bored with the same endless round of petty cares and troubles, but that is what we always find on earth. There is no anguish of the damned any more than we experience the imaginary joys of Heaven. That, to my mind, is one of the strongest proofs possible that we are not dead. If there were such a thing as life after death, it would be entirely different to life on earth. Now this life may differ from life when we were younger, but it is not so entirely different as it would be if we were disembodied spirits. Gentlemen, I move that this house considers that there is no convincing evidence in favor of life after death.'

"I will not detain you with the arguments of his opponent, who maintained that there was life after death. They followed the usual lines which might

be expected. The speaker declared that he was sure he had died, and so on. He admitted that he was puzzled where they were, but considered that they were

probably in purgatory (indignant protests from several staunch Protestants, who declared this was Pope-ish rot). The chairman intervened, and order was restored.

“I felt, however, he only half believed his own arguments.

“The next man who rose had a really ingenious theory, though it failed to convince many of the audience. He said:

“ ‘I know I died, and this life I believe is just a dream. I suppose our brains go on working for some little time after life is declared extinct. Having lost all real control of the body, it spends its time weaving wonderful dreams. Of course I know this cannot last long, but when on earth, I have often dreamed long dreams, in which days and weeks seemed to elapse, and found out afterwards that I had not dozed for more than five minutes. You will say at once, “Then we are merely the phantoms of our brains.” You are right. There is no city, no debating hall, no one but myself. I have dreamed you all. Soon my brain will run down, and then the dream will cease. Look how we go on doing exactly the same things as we did on earth over and over again like automatons. No, the only life after Death consists of the dreams of the dying brain; but I waste my time talking to the creations of my own fancy!’ and he sat down with a morose frown.

“A roar of laughter greeted this speech. Then I sprang up.

“ ‘Gentlemen, I am but a stranger who has wandered into your city on his journey to another place, but if you will only believe me, I think I can convince you that there is a life after Death, and whether or not there is Heaven, there is certainly Hell, and we are in it. Further, there are lower depths of Hell than this, and in them men suffer torments akin to those which are considered proper to Hell. Listen to my own adventures since I died.’

“But it was no use; before I had nearly finished they shouted me down, and several threatened to haul me off to the battlements. As I went out a man followed me, and as soon as I had got out of sight of the building he came up to me and said:

“ ‘Sir, I know you are right, and as you have worked your way up through so many divisions of Hell, you will doubtless escape in the end; may I come with you?’

“Before I could answer his guide became visible, and said, ‘My son, I will guide you out of this realm to a place where loving friends will help you; come, follow me. It was impossible for any to help you till you desired help, but now I may return to you.’ And they went away together.”

CHAPTER XXXIV

HE REACHES THE SEVENTH DIVISION

“So I journeyed on alone, led by my own guide out of that city. We passed other cities and villages all very much alike, till at length we reached a high mountain range. Slowly and painfully up this we climbed, and the higher we went the harder and steeper became the path, till at length we reached the top, and saw a short way in front another rest-house, larger and finer than any I had seen before. High up towered the building, and from the topmost story a great light beamed forth into the darkness.

“But the Powers of Darkness were not going to allow me to escape without one last effort, and suddenly I was surrounded by a howling mob, which tried to drag me back and cast me over the cliff.

“But I had not toiled so hard and suffered so much to lose heart now, and summoning all my will-power to me I hurled my assailants to right and left. Even as I did so my guide stood beside me in all his brightness, and the vile spirits fell back screaming with fear.

“To me the pain was intense, but I bore it, and stumbling forward fell against the door. Instantly it opened, and kind hands drew me in and the door slammed to. As it did so I heard a yell of baffled rage and hate.

“Then I heard my guardian angel’s voice saying, ‘Son, for a while you will not see me, but I shall be always at hand.’

“The strangers whom I could not see because of the light led me away into a darkened room.

“I shall not describe all that happened there. You know already from what J. H. L. has told you.

“For some time I stayed in the hospital undergoing treatment, which was directed to drawing out of my spiritual form all the gross and evil matter it contained.

When this work was completed I had shrunk to the size of a tiny baby. Then they began to build up my frame, and after a short while I was able to take my place in the schools.

“Here I met P., who showed me the greatest kindness, and though I was one of the worst ‘boys’ in the school, never ceased trying to help me.

“When he left the school he particularly urged me to try and follow him, and I determined to do so.

“But that must wait till Saturday, for it is time you returned.”

So though I (J. W.) was loath to leave them, I departed.

CHAPTER XXXV

HE ESCAPES OUT OF HELL AT LAST

AUTOMATIC LETTER, Sept 12th, 1914.

The officer will take control and complete his narrative. — H. J. L.

The Officer. "When it was time for me to leave the school I must admit that a great dread filled me. I feared the terrible darkness almost more than anything else. But I refused to give way to this feeling, and asked to be shown the way.

"Now we are not permitted to go out of Hell by the road by which H. J. L. visited and returned from the schools in Hell. We have to climb the sides of the precipice, and very hard it is.

"We went out of the same door by which I had entered the rest-house, and turning to the right passed along a broad ledge. One side was the chasm which led down to the sixth division, while on our right hand was a high cliff. The darkness seemed blacker than ever, probably because I had begun to get used to light in the schools.

"We were passing a cave when a huge and hideous form sprang out, crying, 'Hold, none may escape from Hell!' But ere he had time to touch me, my guide turned and made the sign of the cross in the direction of the foul creature, who screamed and fled back into his stinking den.

"The next phase will ever remain in my memory as a hideous nightmare. We began to climb the almost precipitous cliff. I kept constantly slipping back. Stones and rubbish slid from beneath my feet, but still on we climbed.

"My guide appeared to float slowly upwards, always a little ahead, and from him the light flowed which lit up my path.

"At length he bade me stay, and I did so thankfully. We had reached a small level platform, and here he bandaged my eyes, saying, 'To your weak faith, even the dim light of half belief will be for a time too strong.'

"So we continued the upward journey, but at length came to a piece up which I simply could not climb. My guide said, 'Fear not, I will help you to surmount this last obstacle, for the end of your long journey is almost attained.'

"Next moment I felt his hand in mine, and making a last effort scrambled out on to the level top of the cliff.

“It seemed to be in a blaze of light, like the plains in India at midday. In spite of the bandage the pain was so intense that I rolled on the ground in anguish. The rest of the story you know; how P. was there to greet me and introduce me to H. J. L., and how from him I have learnt how to communicate through you with the earth.

“Now this task is finished, and I am going with a band of other spirits to work on the astral plane. There I hope to help many of the soldiers who are laying down their lives for their country. My knowledge is considerable, both of the astral plane and of Hell, and I hope to be able to guide and save many; among them perhaps I may still find a few of my old comrades in arms.

“P. has gone back to work in — Hell, and the Monk has passed on beyond this realm through the great wall of fire.

“Now farewell all. — The Officer.”

“I close. — H. J. L.”

PART III

W. A.: THE ASTRAL PLANE

CHAPTER I

W. A. PASSES OVER

LETTER FROM W. A., April 11th, 1914.

“I find it difficult to start, but shall do better in a moment. I am W. A. You know the rest.

“When death came upon me I seemed to lose consciousness for a moment, and then I suddenly felt much freer and better.

“I cried out, ‘I’m better, M.’ Then I was aware of a terrible darkness all around me. I could see nothing — and hear nothing. ‘What is it? Is this the beginning of death?’ I inquired.

“I passed my hands over my body, and was thankful to find I had a body and could feel it. Then dimly in the far distance I perceived a faint speck of light. It grew brighter, and seemed to be approaching me.

“Suddenly close by me I was aware of a greater intensity of darkness, and then a sensation of something horrible and evil became evident. I trembled and seemed filled with a nausea, and turned towards the distant speck of light. But though I could now see what it really was, I was unable to approach it.

“What I saw was a great and glorious spirit of light, but so far distant that I could form no clear idea of his features and relative size.

“ ‘Am I dead?’ I shrieked; and an evil voice at my shoulder cried, ‘Yes, but fear not. I will look after you, protect you, and guide you.’

“I shrank from this awful being, nevertheless, and turning to the bright spirit tried to approach him, but could not. Then I tried to find my way out of the room, for I conceived myself still to be in it, but found I could move no great distance from what I ultimately discovered was my body.

“Now to make matters plain to you I should say that I was really in my astral body, but of course did not know it at the time. Further, having done little on earth to develop my spiritual faculties, I was at first as one who is blind.

“After a while I began to be faintly aware of someone weeping. I knew instinctively it was M., and sought her that I might comfort her, but alas! I could not even see her. After what seemed like an endless age I began to see

things dimly, like a man looking through a dirty glass, and the things I saw appeared blurred and indistinct.

“In time, let me tell you, we astrals are able to perceive you mortals as clearly as you can see each other, yet when we reach the state of the spiritual body we see your bodies much less distinctly, but your souls and your thoughts much more plainly.

“Gradually I became conscious of the fact that I was watching some persons place something in a box, and in time realized it was my coffin. Then I was aware of traveling in a vague, dream-like way, of crossing land and water and land.

“Suddenly I perceived that I was in familiar surroundings. It was P. Then a vague sensation of my funeral, and then, clear and distinct at last, I saw

the coffin being lowered into the grave. I followed the mourners back to my house, and by degrees I began to understand more clearly the conditions under which I now lived.

“The first thing that I realized was that I who had always considered myself a business man had failed those I loved best in the very point I should have been most business-like about. I was present while men whom I had believed to be my friends devised means by which they might take advantage of my carelessness in drawing up my will. I had left my dear ones at their mercy, and mercy they would get none. Oh, how I suffered, and yet even then I realized the justice of my punishment. I had often taken advantage of another man’s carelessness to snatch a mean advantage. I called it ‘Good business’ then, now I saw it in its true light.

“I drifted away, for I found, strive as I would, I could do nothing to influence these harpies, and so fled away dejected and miserable.

“Suddenly I heard a voice strangely familiar to me, and I saw D.

“ ‘Why, W. dear, how glad I am to meet you!’ she cried.

“I can’t say how glad I was to meet at length someone with whom I had been in contact in life.

“ ‘It’s quite like old times’ I cried, ‘only, alas! We have no bodies.’

“ ‘Don’t worry about that, we can manage that,” she replied. ‘Come with me, dear.’

“We went along hand in hand, and presently we found ourselves in a room. In it were a man and a woman.

“ ‘Watch me!’ she cried.

“In some strange way she appeared to attach herself to the woman. The effect was magical. She had appeared pale, wan and shadowy, but now before me she grew young, handsome and healthy. She seemed also to become more and more material.

“ ‘Splendid!’ I cried; ‘how do you do it?’

“ ‘I suck up the vital energy from this fool and convert it to my own use. You do likewise with that man. Then in a large measure we shall be as we were of old.

“ ‘But doesn’t it hurt the woman?’

“ ‘Of course; it drains away her vitality, and in time will kill her. But what of that?’

“ ‘My God, no!’ I cried; ‘I will never do such a thing. I may have been a blackguard, but I’ll never do that. Get away, you wretch!’

“ ‘Don’t be so silly, dear,’ she began, but I was filled with a sudden sense of loathing.

“She turned like a fiend on me and shrieked, ‘You shall pay for this. I’ll bring someone who will make you suffer for it!’

“ ‘Do so!’ I cried, and left her.

“Now I will stop for the time being. — W. A.”

CHAPTER II

HOW OLD FRIENDS BEHAVED ON LEARNING OF HIS DEATH

TRANCE CONVERSATION, April 13th.

I felt myself whirling through space, and then found myself in H. J. L.’s room. He greeted me with evident pleasure, and then added, “W. A. will be here in a moment, and I think he had better continue the narrative he began in the letter.”

The next moment W. A. entered, and almost at once began.

“After leaving D., I wandered about feeling lost and forsaken. Presently I thought of a former friend, and immediately I was standing in a breakfast-room in a large house. The place was quite familiar to me. A man and woman were seated at breakfast, and the former spoke.

“ ‘I’ve just heard that W. A. is dead — died very suddenly in ***I***.’

“I (W. A.) watched her closely.

“She turned slightly pale, then said, ‘Poor fellow, he was rather a pal of yours, wasn’t he? I expect you’ll miss him.’

“ ‘Yes, I shall; he was a decent sort. Of course, he had his faults, as we all have, but he was a *man*.’

“A few minutes later she slipped out of the room, and I followed her. She entered her bedroom, and I expected to see her throw herself on the bed in a paroxysm of grief, for we had been on the most ultimate terms — you understand me?”

I nodded.

“She did nothing of the sort, but going to a desk opened it. From it she took two packets of letters and my photo. One packet contained my letters to her, the other her letters to me.

“ ‘What a blessing I got him to give me back those letters’ she murmured. ‘It was only last time, too, he brought them. The next lover I have I’ll take damned good care I write nothing compromising. If these had been in his possession when he died, I should have never known when I was safe.’

“She went to the empty fireplace and carefully burnt first my letters, then hers. Finally she took my photo in her hands. Anxiously I hung near her, hoping for some sign of grief, or at least regret.

“ ‘So, W., you’ve gone. We have had many jolly days together. I shall have to find someone else to teach me golf now. Yes, I had better burn it. What’s the good of being sentimental? If I kept it, it might lead to awkward suspicions if discovered.’

“She pushed the photo into the dying flames, and in a minute it was consumed. She went to her jewel box, and taking out a bracelet looked at it.

“ ‘Is she going to destroy that too?’ I thought, and remembered that it had cost me £20.

“I began to read her thoughts, and they were these: ‘Can I safely keep it, or would it be wise to sell it? If I do the latter, I don’t suppose I shall get a third of its value. It’s a beauty. I saw one very like it marked £25 only the day before yesterday. After all, I can tell him (she meant her husband) I saved up and bought it second-hand.’

“She turned and left the room, but I did not follow her further. I had had enough. I was never over-sentimental, but the cold-bloodedness of the woman froze me. There was not one genuine feeling of regret for her old lover among all her thoughts.

“Her husband, the very man I had wronged, felt more genuine regard for me than she did.

“This set me visiting my former friends and acquaintances, but I did not obtain much satisfaction from it. For the most part, they dismissed the matter of my death by a formal expression of regret. Some, however, only looked upon it as an excellent opportunity to obtain some pecuniary advantage for themselves. The very men whom I had regarded most as my friends were the ones generally who set to work to rob those who were left dependent on my estate. There were a few exceptions, and often these were the very men upon whose consideration I had the least call.

“But these kindnesses were few and far between, and I suffered misery unspeakable. I understand that I have never been into Hell proper. In fact, there is no doubt of it. But all the same that period of my existence was a very colorable imitation of it.

“Then I determined to follow up H., more than half fearing to find her playing the same game as the others.

“Thank God she wasn’t. Had she been, I think I should have followed the promptings of that evil spirit who is always at my shoulder to set to work to be avenged on some of them.

“Her example kept me from that fatal sin, the punishment for which is, as you got from the officer, Hell.

CHAPTER III

ASTRAL FORESTS. THE HUNTERS AND THE HUNTED

“After a while I began to realize existence on the astral plane much more clearly. I found it was peopled, and had its forests and animal kingdoms, as has the earth. This ushered in a new phase of existence.

“I had just come away from watching some of M.’s struggles, and was feeling dejected and miserable. Out of nowhere in particular appeared two forms, a man’s and a woman’s. I knew the latter. I had met the man before on the earth. She poured out a torrent of abuse, and urged the man to go for me. I closed with him, and we battled like two savages, while she tried to attack me from behind.

“It was soon over. I thrashed him so soundly that he fled away shrieking. Then I turned my attention to her. I did not hesitate, I flogged her. It was in no spirit of revenge, but solely to give her a lesson and compel her to leave me

alone in the future. I felt no remorse afterwards, and still feel it had to be done.

“After parting from these two I wandered into a strange forest. The trees were in shape very much like giant mare’s-tails, and I knew at once this was the astral body of a great forest of the coal measure.

“At times I was able to get a glimpse of the position on earth which it occupied, faint and fleeting, yet sufficient to let me see that it was situated on what is now the Embankment; but though at times I thus saw, as it were, two planes converge and overlap one another, yet the shape of the astral ground and that of the world as you know it did not correspond.

“These glimpses of two worlds at once were, however, very rare, and usually I was confined to the astral alone.

“It was strange that this forest should be situated on the Embankment where at the present day no coal exists, but I suppose at one time it did exist there. I expected that I should find it was on the Northern or Welsh coal fields; but though I do not doubt there are such astral forests in those places, yet the forest I learnt to know seemed to correspond with the Embankment.

“This forest was a most dreary place, dark, evil-smelling, full of marshes, and, worst of all, of savage animals of former ages. Again and again these weird creatures appeared and attempted to attack me. Often they pursued me for what seemed like hundreds of miles. On and on I fled and they followed, but they never caught me or approached any nearer than they were when the pursuit began. This was not so strange as it seems, for they willed to hunt me and I willed to fly. My will was not sufficiently strong to compel them to cease hunting me, nor was theirs strong enough to hold me rooted to the spot.

“After a time their interest in me weakened, and they turned their attention in other directions. Then I was able to go on my own way for a time unmolested.”

J. W. I quite follow you so far, but what would have happened if you had stumbled into the clutches one of those monsters unawares? They could not have killed you, of course, but surely they could cause you pain, just as you caused pain (by exercising your will to that intent) on the man who attacked you?”

W. A. “I was always able to ken, as it were by instinct, when I was nearing some of these animals. None of them had sufficient will-power to compel me to come towards them against my wishes.

“Now man has developed his will-power to a much greater extent than the animal and so he can compel them to obey him, and even compel other men to wait and be hurt. Often, too, two men each wish to hurt the other, as in the case you quoted. Then they will go towards each other, and he who had the strongest will usually prevail. A good man, however, could not be attacked by an evil on the astral plane, nor his guardian angel could shield him. I had driven my guardian angel so far away that during my earlier time on the astral plane I had to fend for myself in a large measure.

“Further, most really spiritual souls remain but very short time on the astral plane, and also souls of very old men, or those who had suffered a long or wearing sickness. Of course they may go to Hell, or they may go to any of these divisions in the spirit plane, but they won’t remain long in the astral.

“Young children also are seldom long on the astral plane. They have not had time to take up much earth matter, so to speak.

“To continue. I spent what seemed like an endless age being hunted through these great forests. Sometimes I revisited earth, hoping, so to speak, to break the magic spell, but it was no good. Whenever I left the earth spot I had been haunting, back I was in that damned old forest.

“People often ask two questions:

“(1) ‘Why should ghosts come?’

“(2) ‘Why don’t our dear ones communicate with those they have left behind?’

“Of course there are dozens of answers to both questions, but my experiences will supply at any rate one answer to each.

“We cling to our old surroundings because we are not yet sufficiently clear of the earth dross to leave the astral plane, and yet find that plane very unpleasant. Secondly, being thus like hunted beasts, we have no time for thinking of anyone but ourselves.

“Often when this stage is past we have formed new interests and have new duties to perform, therefore do not trouble. You must remember that it is extremely hard to communicate from here to earth, and the more spiritual we are the harder it is.

“The simplest method is by a medium, and often then the messages we get through arrive warped and twisted. Often therefore we lose heart and give up the attempt. It is only when we get a good medium through whom our messages can reach earth in the form in which they are dispatched that we think it worth while to continue to experiment.

“Well, again I have rather wandered.

“After some time I did get out of this forest, but only to find myself in a more modern type of forest.

“Here I underwent similar experiences with modern animals — lions and tigers, wolves, and so forth. Sometimes these animals would hunt deer and antelopes over hills and dales, but I could never discover that they caught anything.

“After a time I found, however, that there was a difference here. Whether it was that I had developed, or whether it was due to the fact that these creatures had learnt about man on earth and had come to fear him I can’t say, probably it was due to both facts.

But I discovered this. If I turned and faced my pursuer, and willed that he should fly from me, at the same time advancing towards him or them, sooner or later the creature would turn and fly.

“At first I only attempted it with solitary beasts, my first adventure being with a large lone wolf. Encouraged by my success I next tackled a lion, and finally succeeded in putting a whole pack of wolves to flight.

“Soon after this I was able to leave the forests and came into new surroundings.”

J. W. “Did you not feel any of your old earth desires? The officer in his account speaks exclusively of them.”

W. A. “Yes. During almost the whole time I was continually desiring to gratify the old lusts of the flesh. Many times when I was haunting the earth I found myself drifting towards places where these abounded. The whole time that cursed devil was urging me to gratify my desires by obsessing someone. Again and again I nearly gave way to the temptation, but each time I heard the warning voice of my guardian angel saying, ‘If you do that, you go to Hell.’

“It was not only that, however, but a feeling that the thing was in itself uncanny and loathsome which helped me to resist the temptation.

“After I had ceased to fear the wild beasts, these desires made a redoubled effort to capture me, but at the same time I found I had drawn a little nearer to my guide.”

CHAPTER IV

HE DETERMINES TO HELP MEN ON EARTH THAT HE MAY ESCAPE FROM THE ASTRAL PLANE

“Slowly I began to long for some purpose in life. I seemed to be ever drifting about with no object in view. I don’t know how long it was as you reckon time before this idea really took definite shape; to me it seemed after ages of suffering.

“At once there came an answer from my guide, who seemed at the same time to draw much nearer to me.

“ ‘Why not strive to approach nearer to God, to become more spiritual, and, in time, to leave the astral for the spiritual plane.’

“ ‘I’d gladly do so if l could!’ I replied. ‘How can I?’

“ ‘By striving to help someone else. That is the amplest method for you!’

“ ‘How can I help anyone here? ...’ I began.

“ ‘That is for you to discover!’ he answered sharply.

“This gave me at any rate an object in life, and I began to think how I could help someone. I am still fearfully ignorant as to the power possessed by spirits, and at that time I knew far less.

“My thought naturally drifted to M., and I soon concentrated my attention on trying to help her, and succeeded.

“I was fearfully pleased at this success, as I knew she would now have a good time on the whole.

“I then noticed that my guardian angel had drawn quite close to me, and the evil spirit had drifted farther away.

“ ‘You have made a good beginning, but of course this piece of work was easy, for you cared for this woman. Now you must help someone who is nothing to you.’

“This was not so interesting nor so easy. It took me a long time to decide who I would try to help. At last the chance came, and with it the inspiration how to act.

“I was in Southampton — I often go there even still — when I saw a young fellow making up accounts in a large shop. Something drew me towards him, and I at once perceived that he was contemplating falsifying the accounts and pocketing the difference.

“Then the inspiration came. I exerted all my will, desiring that he should both see and hear me.

“Suddenly the young man started up and dropped his pen, which made a blot on the page. I knew he saw me, and raised my arm in a menacing attitude.

“After a moment’s pause I spoke, or, rather, willed that he should hear these words:

“ ‘Young man, stop before it is too late, I have come back from the grave to warn you. That way leads to disgrace and prison. Be warned in time.’

“He shrieked, and fled cowering into a comer of the place, and began to blabber out that he’d never do it, he promised.

“Seeing my object was attained, and feeling the strain on my will was too great, I willed that I should become invisible, and of coarse vanished front his sight.

“I saw him stagger to the book and place it quietly on his desk. As he did so he murmured, ‘My God, my God! It was sent as a warning. What a fool I should have been!’

“I left him, feeling convinced that I had been successful.

“I soon perceived my guide, now close beside me.

“ ‘Well done,’ he said, ‘your second task is accomplished. There still remains one more. You must now help someone you had cause to hate.’

“I at once thought of D., who had tried to drag me down after death, but my guide said, ‘No, you cannot help her. You must try and help someone still alive.’

“After a lot of thought I remembered a fellow who had swindled me rather badly some time before I died.

The details don’t matter. I must admit I didn’t much relish the job; still, I determined to do the best I could.

“I found that one of his partners was intending to cut with a large sum of money, and the result for him would be financial ruin.’

“How to help him was the difficulty. I tried to inspire him to look into certain matters which would have aroused his suspicions, but it was no go; he was so materialistic that I could not make the slightest impression.

“Then I tried to appear to him as a ghost, as in the former case, but it didn’t come off this time. He was far too materialistic to be affected.

“Then I tried his wife, but with the same result.

“At length I hit on the only way. His partner drank. I found him sitting in his office sleeping off the effects of too much whiskey at lunch. My former enemy was seated in *his* office hard at work. They each had a separate office.

“I obtained control of the drunken man for a short time in a similar manner to the way in which I am able to write through you when in trance. Of course, as this was my first experience, and, further, he was not in trance but only sleeping in drink, my control was not very good. However, I made him write this:

“ ‘Dear, — This morning I determined to cut to South America with £5,000 in cash, which I drew at midday from our joint account. It practically emptied that account. At the last moment my better self prevailed. I therefore write this to you. I trust that you will not consider it necessary to prosecute, but of course I understand that we shall have to dissolve partnership. — Yours, etc.’

“Then I walked the man into his partner’s office, made him hand him the letter, and then took him back safely to his chair and left him there still asleep.

He was not left asleep long though, for my former enemy rushed into the office and woke him up.

“I need not tell you all that passed; sufficient it is to say that the partner had to hand back the cash he had drawn out and dissolve partnership. My former foe did not prosecute, and the business was settled quietly and without anyone getting to know the ins and outs of the case.

“ ‘You have at length won — your release,’ cried my guide, and as he spoke I saw the evil spirit who had haunted me for so long being rapidly whirled away by some unknown force.

“I will describe how I emerged on to the spirit plane at another time.”

He ceased, and H. J. L. took me out of the room.

“You must return now,” he said; “you have been here quite long enough.”

Next moment I was whirling through space — then oblivion. — J. W.

CHAPTER V

TYPES OF BEINGS OTHER THAN MEN.

ANIMAL ASTRALS, FAIRIES, ELEMENTALS

LETTER at 109 CHARING CROSS ROAD, Saturday, April 18th, 6:45 P.M.

H. J. L. "We shall not write long tonight, as conditions are not very good. W. A. will continue from the place he left off on Monday."

W. A. "My guide said to me, 'Before you leave this plane it would be well for you to learn something about the various types of beings who inhabit it besides men.'

"He pointed to a crowd of hideous beings who appeared to be hovering round a public-house, together with a large number of earth-bound men and women.

" 'Carefully distinguish between those astrals which are still tenanted by men and those which are merely empty shells.'

"I then perceived that there were several kinds of astrals. Those still inhabited by human spirits seemed to have more life in them than the others. These let us call No. 1. No. 2 group were the empty astral shells from which the spirits had departed. Some seemed shadowy and faint — real ghosts — while others seemed almost as vital as the inhabited astrals.

"My guide explained, 'These are divisible into two groups:

" '(a) Those astrals that make no effort to prolong their existence once the spirit has fled, and (b) those that do.'

" 'The latter suck up the magnetic fluid which is inherent in all living creatures, and in so doing drain it away from its rightful owners. They have no real intellects, such as evil men who obsess have, but have merely a kind of blind instinct akin to that of a plant. They are parasites, and fatten on the life of other creatures.'

" 'How is it that some of these empty shells desire to prolong this existence while others do not?' I asked.

"He replied, 'It is because they have been inhabited by gross and materialistic spirits, and often by spirits who have started the instinct by obsessing someone. You know that evil woman wished you to obsess that man. Had you done so, in time you would have endeavored not merely to obtain a temporary strengthening of your astral body, which would enable you to enjoy again the

lusts of the flesh, but also you would have begun to desire to prolong your existence in this plane, fearing to fall into Hell.

“ ‘For a time you would have been able to delay that result by sucking up the magnetic fluid from some weak mortal. In the end you would have been driven from your astral body, and your spirit sunk to Hell, but your astral, having acquired the habit, would continue to hang on to some poor wretch like a leech, and by so doing might have been able to hang about the earth for an indefinite time — possibly hundreds of years.

“ ‘Thus obsessing not only hurls the soul to Hell? but, as it were, creates a ghoul which can continue to afflict the living.’

“Thus I learnt that there were at least three definite types of astrals proper:

“(1) those still occupied by the soul.

“(2) those which were real ghosts, and tended rapidly to disintegrate.

“(3) Those which have lost the soul, but yet retain a separate existence by sucking up the vital elements of living mortals.

“ ‘Are there any other inhabitants of these realms?’ I inquired.

“ ‘Many others,’ my guide replied; ‘but let me first say that animal astrals leave empty shells, and even occasionally these “shells” may be seized on by evil men who have lost their own astral forms, and wish temporarily to possess one. Such spirits, may, further, endeavor to retain possession and renew their vitality, as in the case of their old astral bodies. This they can seldom do for long, and usually destroy the astral in their endeavors, but occasionally they succeed in starting the vampire habit, and then lose control of the body. The result is that the animal astral, having obtained the vampire instinct, may continue it.’ .

“ ‘Such cases are rare, however, and evil spirits more usually seize the astral shell of some elemental, for they can more easily mould it to their own original shape.’

“ ‘The second group are elementals. Now those you saw just now by that low drinking-den are one of the most numerous types. These are formed by the elements of a low and bestial nature thrown off by vicious men, and they therefore take these loathsome shapes. They can obtain a kind of half existence by hanging round the spots on earth where this type of lust is indulged in. By so doing they don’t get direct satisfaction from the drunkard, but they do get some materialistic elements which enable them to keep in existence. They have no separate souls, or even intellects.’

“I asked, ‘How is it then that they take any forms at all? ‘

“*He*. ‘Elements of the same type attract each other, and the actual form they take is due to the influence of astral currents which flow through this plane in a manner analogous to the currents of the sea. Just as a mass of sawdust thrown into water tends to drift into various rough shapes and forms, so do these. Similarly, these forms are usually short-lived and fleeting. Now look at that group.’

“ ‘Why!’ I cried, ‘Bless my soul! There are fairies then!’ For these elementals looked like fairies of one’s childhood.

“ ‘Yes, there are fairies, and some more substantial than these.’ As he spoke I noticed that they had broken up and vanished.

“ ‘What are they?’ I cried.

‘“These are elemental astral, atoms thrown off by young children. They naturally drift into these pretty, harmless shapes, influenced to do so by the thoughts and dreams of children. There are fairies of a more real type to which I will return later. There are whole hosts of elementals who are thrown off by men of low spiritual development — savages, and so forth. These are quite distinct from the elementals formed out of the astral elements thrown off by evil men. They include many of the satyrs and wood nymphs of ancient folk tales, but not all.’

“Then I saw the pub again, and, besides the crowd of elementals, astrals, and so forth, I was aware of an awful being who seemed to be ruler and master of them all.

“ ‘What is that awful brute?!’ I cried.

“ ‘That,’ my guide answered, ‘is a vice personified. Such beings are created by the devotion to any particular lust by all men so afflicted. This drink fiend is something far more real than any ordinary elemental. He is the embodiment not of one man’s evil, but of the evil thoughts of thousands. He is not really of this plane, as are the elementals and astral shells, but of Hell itself. He is the embodiment of an “idea.”

“ ‘In your next stage of development you will see many such “ideas,” but, fortunately, they will mostly be good ones. This being belongs properly to Hell, but comes hither to urge on these sots to more evil. He is, as it were, one of the connecting links between the astral plane and Hell, just as I am one of the connecting links with the realms of progress.

“ ‘Now besides these elementals there exist a number of spirits who never inhabited a physical body, and yet are real spirits, with intellects of their own.

Some of these occupy astral bodies, others do not, and I will deal with them later."

"But I [W. A. — ED.] think we have done enough for tonight. Now good-bye. — W. A."

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TRANCE VISION, ETC.

AT 109 CHARING CROSS ROAD.

Monday, April 20th, 1914.

W. A.'s NARRATIVE.

"My guide further told me concerning the spirits who have astral bodies but have never possessed real physical bodies, as follows:

" 'These beings may be good or bad or mixed, just as man is mixed. The latter are the largest group, and they are open to the same temptation that besets men here, that is, to try by obsessing to obtain something akin to a physical body.

" 'If they do so, they sooner or later suffer the fate that befalls men who obsess. They are thrown out of their astral bodies and fall into Hell. They are therefore those who never were men, and yet are in Hell.

" 'So, too, astrals may progress to the spiritual plane. This is most frequently done by their striving to help mortals on earth, but there are other methods.

" 'To this group of beings belong most of the so-called fairies who are seen still by a few, and at one time, when men were nearer to the "next world" were often seen on earth. These beings, since they, like men, are often of a mixed disposition, are liable to do foolish or even wicked acts, as well as good and kind ones. Their most noticeable characteristic is irresponsibility, and often indeed mischievousness. They know little of pain and sorrow, and therefore are less serious than men.

" 'This is a great hindrance to any progress on their part, but, contrariwise, they are less likely to become tainted with the more deadly spiritual sins, such as cruelty and hate.

" 'I do not propose to deal any further with these astral creatures, as it would not help your spiritual progress, but it is well that you should realize that man is not the only creature in the astral plane, much less on the spiritual. Man is so egotistical that he is forever imagining that he is the only being who matters.

When on earth he often considers the animals are of no importance. Even when not a materialist, he arrogates to himself the sole possession of a soul, and considers he alone has any possibility of a future life. In like manner he, knowing nothing about the subject, often declares that there are no spirits in the land beyond the grave except men. Even when dead he often does not realize that there are countless other orders of beings under God's gracious protection besides men.

" 'Like attracts like, and it is often the case that a man meets few other beings save men, or, if he does, he fails to see that they were not men once. He sees exalted spirits who were men, and jumps to the conclusion that all exalted spirits were men. He learns that he has an astral body, and at once assumes that every inhabited astral must necessarily possess a human spirit.

" 'Further, it must be remembered that for the most part it is easier for the spirits who have been men to help or hinder men, for they know far better the trials and difficulties that beset men.

" 'Finally, it is by no means easy to tell what type of spirit one is dealing with even when one knows that there are many orders of creation. This is especially the cast in the lower planet of existence, and it is from these for the most part that earth derives what little information it does possess of *the next world*.'

" 'Were you a man?' I inquired.

" 'I was! he replied; 'and so are most guardian angels, but not all. But enough of these matters. Only beware of jumping to hasty conclusions, especially on negative evidence.

" 'Now it is time for you to leave the astral plane. Kneel and pray.' "

CHAPTER VI

He Leaves the Astral for the Spirit Plane

"I did so, and repeated the Lord's Prayer.

"As I did this a great weight seemed to crush me down. My surroundings began to blur and quiver. The astral landscape became like a painted canvas, and then this grew thin. It split and rent in a thousand fragments, and dissolved into tatters of mist. These seemed to be whirled away as if by a strong wind, but I felt no breeze.

"The weight grew more and more heavy. I seemed to be enclosed in a coffin of lead. At length I could bear it no longer, and shrieked to my guide 'Help me, for God's sake, to get clear of this weight.'

"He held out his hand to me, and I sprang towards it, and, to my astonishment, found myself free of the weight.

"Then my astral shell was caught by the same wind which was shattering the landscape. It whirled and twisted and grew flimsy. Then it whirled out of sight.

"The mists drifted quickly away and I saw a beautiful landscape, the type of landscape familiar to you by now. I had reached the plane of the spiritual body.

I had hardly time to realize it before, on every side, visions of my former life came crowding upon me in a wild chaos, like a hideous nightmare from which I could not escape.

"I could not see my guide, and called desperately to him, and a voice answered *Pray*.

"Then I prayed, and as I did so the visions ceased to be chaos, and took on a regular sequence. From my earliest childhood up to the hour of my death every act and thought were there shown as a little drama enacted again and again. Not only the evil, but also the good."

Here H. J. L. intervened.

"The rest was practically the same as my own experience, so we won't go over it again. A., just tell Jack about your spiritual body."

He smiled a little sheepishly."

"My present body looks like that of a fairly young boy, but then it was as small as one of eight. I suppose I'm now in size equal to a boy of twelve or thirteen."

J. W. "Yes, not more than thirteen."

W. A. “Well, when I discovered this, I asked my guide, who was leading me to the school to which Mr. L. also went, ‘Why have I such a tiny spiritual body?’

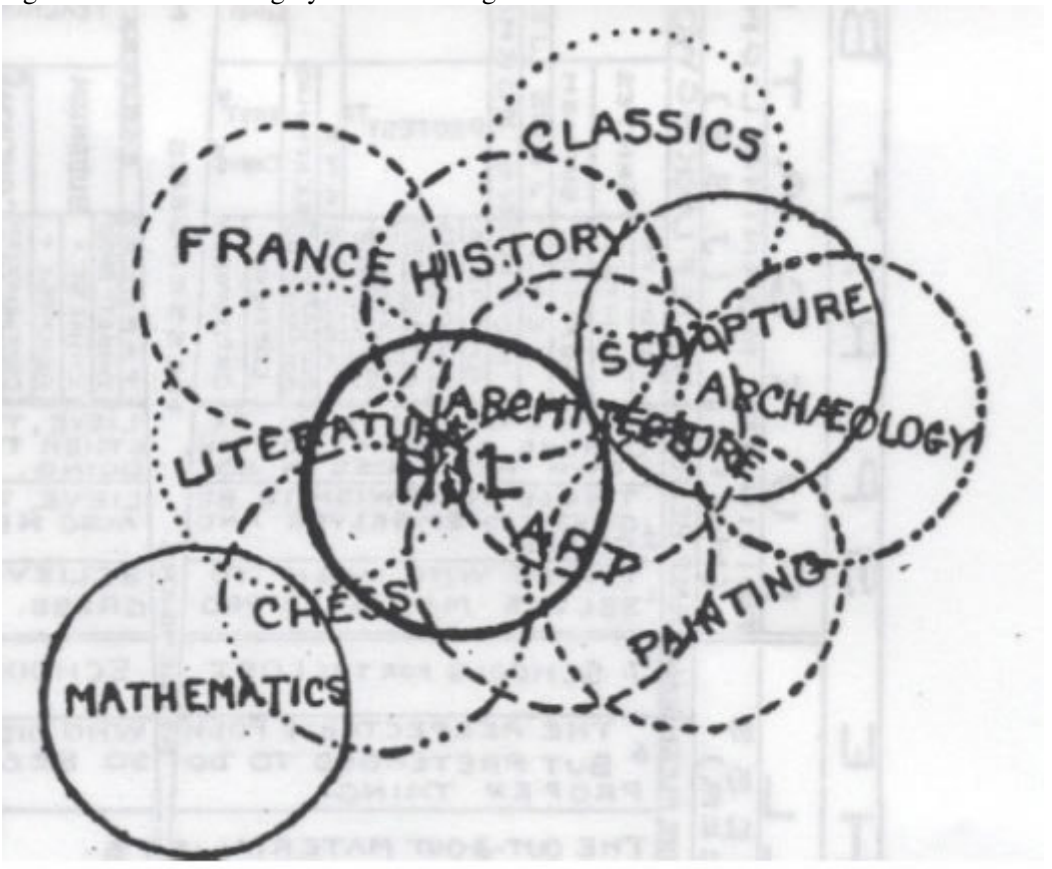
“He answered rather sternly, ‘Because you did so little to develop your spiritual nature on earth. Indeed, but for your work on the astral plane you could not have come to the spiritual plane yet.’

“That’s the worst of it, that’s why I’m making such slow progress, that and the fact that I still bother about earth things too much.”

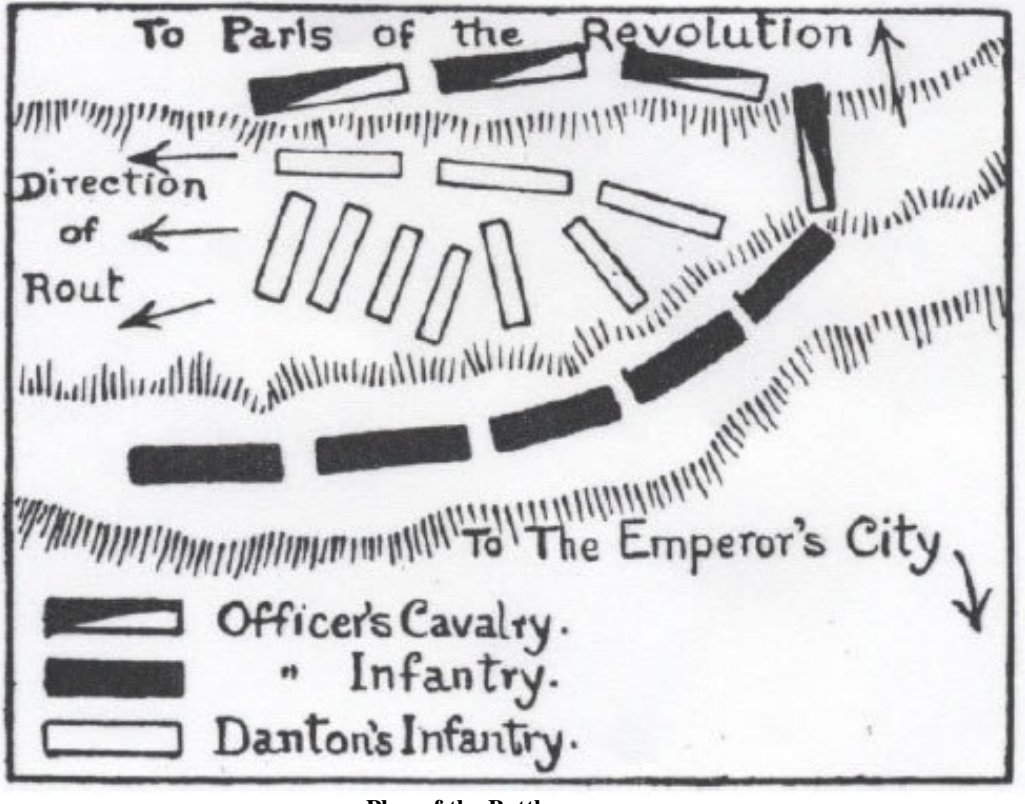
H. J. L. rose. “Well, Jack, say goodbye to Mr. A., for you must be going now, and you won’t see him again for some little time, as he’s done his share for the time being.”

So we shook hands, and almost immediately afterwards I seemed to lose consciousness. — J. W.

Diagram of Spirit Plane.



Spheres of Interest.



Plan of the Battle.